

# The Listener

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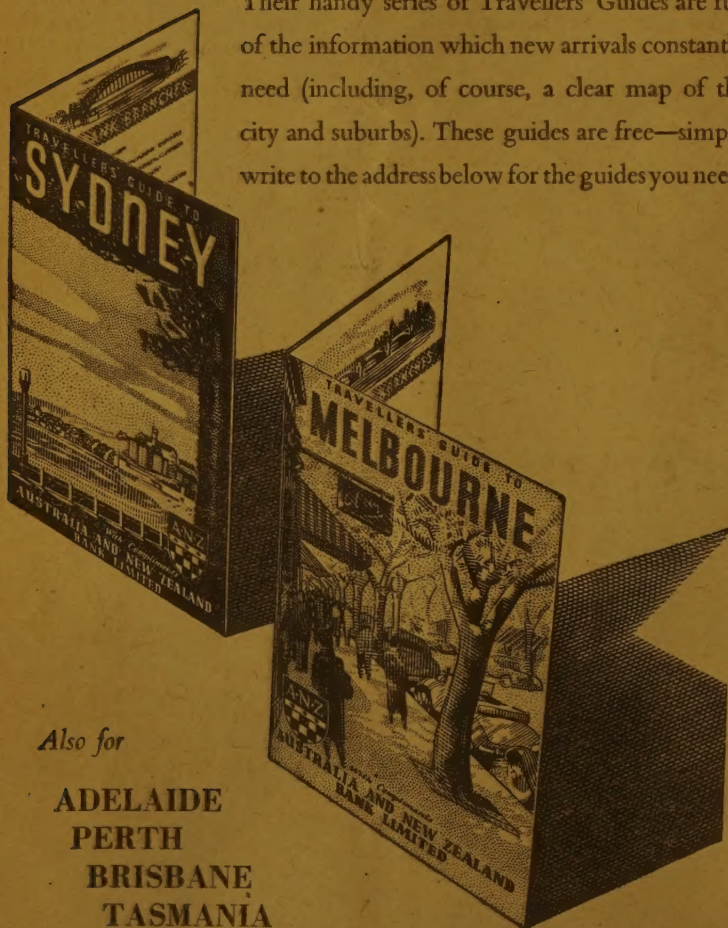


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# The Listener

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## Mr. Khrushchev's Managerial Revolution

By ANDREW SHONFIELD

THERE is a tendency to talk as if the latest Russian move to reorganise the management of Soviet industry had been launched suddenly by Mr. Khrushchev out of the blue. The truth is rather that Mr. Khrushchev's proposals are one further step in a process which has been going on more or less ever since the death of Stalin. What has happened is that the organs of control at the centre in Moscow have been gradually ridding themselves of the job of detailed and direct supervision of various parts of the huge industrial complex that has now been built up in the Soviet Union. There have been ups and downs in this process, and I would not suggest that the Soviet leaders themselves have been following a clear-cut deliberate policy right through. They have been responding to circumstances; and their empiricism, as people concerned to secure the maximum industrial output at the lowest cost, has had to do battle with established dogmas about the nature of central planning, as an infallible instrument for securing the greatest good for the greatest number.

Marxist theory has no place for the problems of sheer administrative muddle which arise when you try to control too many things in detail from one point at the centre. I suspect that one of the reasons why Communists in the past have never bothered about this kind of question is that they have always taken it for granted that running big business was extremely easy. All that they could see in capitalism was muddle and waste—the incoherence of the market place, with capitalists responding blindly to the forces of supply and demand and trampling the working classes underfoot in the process. In the place of this a wise and omnipotent state power would regulate by decree how much of each commodity was to be produced and where it was to be distributed.

The discovery made by the Russians in the nineteen-fifties is that detailed control from the centre produces its own incoherence and waste. It is not the same kind of waste as is produced by the operation

of the market place; but it can be just as expensive. The Soviet Union today contains over 200,000 separate industrial enterprises, some of them very large indeed. In the course of a year the buying and selling of materials, semi-finished goods, and so on between these enterprises must result in literally billions of transactions. What has been happening is that the Ministry responsible for authorising these transactions in Moscow or somewhere else has fixed things up in the way that seemed most convenient to itself. It has tended to rely as much as possible on supplies derived from factories and other enterprises under its own direct control. And in order to put themselves in a stronger position, the officials within these Ministries have in some cases set up new plants to produce things which are already available from plants controlled by other Ministries. The duplication of effort in this and in many other ways, has, it seems, resulted in a tremendous waste of resources.

The real defect behind all this is the Soviet antipathy towards trade. The emphasis from the beginning has been all on production; there has been an almost total neglect of the techniques of buying and selling—partly, no doubt, because they bear such a strong capitalist taint. It is in no way surprising in this spiritual climate that each industrial Ministry should develop into a kind of semi-autarkic state within a state. The aim of every Russian industrial manager has been to produce as much as possible of everything himself and to rely as little as possible on supplies from the outside. Outside supplies are always a nuisance. This is partly because stocks of materials are in general low in Russia, compared with the needs of industries which have been increasing their output at a tremendous pace over the past few years. The result is that everyone tries to hoard whatever materials can be obtained. There are, it is true, financial sanctions on factory managers who buy and hold excessive quantities of stock. But apparently they are willing to bear the financial penalty rather than



subject themselves to the risk of losing production because their supply of materials of one kind or another have temporarily run out.

A new attempt to increase the volume of stocks at the base of Soviet industry is one of the notable features of the Soviet plan for 1957. The other feature, which figured prominently in the debates of the Supreme Soviet last week, is the decision to abolish a large number of the giant industrial Ministries which have been controlling Soviet factory production from Moscow. This dramatic move which has been so widely publicised is in fact the logical continuation of a process of devolution that has been going forward steadily during the past four years. Year by year the Moscow Ministries have been quietly shedding their direct responsibility for the control of Soviet industrial production. In 1953 these super-bureaucrats at the centre controlled no less than 70 per cent. of all Russian factory output. The proportion has since been brought down to 40 per cent. of the total.

### Extensive Decentralisation

In fact the Khrushchev plan has been tried out, so to say, on a miniature scale in a number of selected industries before the launching of the latest scheme for the systematic abolition of the great industrial departments centred in Moscow. But the degree of decentralisation is more extensive under the latest plan. Previously responsibility was taken away from the centre and handed over to the governments of the individual republics which make up the Soviet Union. Under Mr. Khrushchev's new deal the bigger republics themselves are divided into smaller economic regions, each of which will have a council exercising control over a number of enterprises.

Even so, these men on the regional councils will have a job of industrial management to do which is pretty ambitious by any ordinary standard. The Soviet Union is to be divided into ninety-two economic regions, each with an average of more than 2,000 factories to control. It remains to be seen whether the new councils will not reproduce some of the vices of the overblown bureaucracy which they are intended to replace. Their main advantage is intended to be that they will open the way for a more extensive and rational exchange of goods among enterprises within these geographical groupings. Instead of sending all the way to Moscow for something, which the Ministry might then arrange to be supplied from the other end of Russia, the factory will be encouraged to obtain what it wants directly from other organisations on the spot.

The danger, which was pointed out again in the course of the recent meeting of the Supreme Soviet, is that this may tempt the regions to try to make themselves self-sufficient economic entities, like the old Ministries centred on Moscow. But this, it seems, is a risk which Mr. Khrushchev and the other Soviet leaders are prepared to take. They apparently rely on the vigilance of the Communist Party to see that any tendency towards economic regionalism is checked, just as the party has checked any movement towards genuine political independence of the regions of the Soviet Union in the past.

The main thing is to persuade Soviet organisations to trade with one another on their own initiative, instead of waiting for permission from above. This means not only moving the seat of economic power from the centre out to the new local authorities in the economic regions, but also giving the individual factory manager his head. It seems to me that there is no serious evidence to show, as some commentators have

suggested, that the latest move is really an attempt to re-assert the authority of the Communist Party over the class of factory managers who were beginning to get above themselves. The whole trend of the past three or four years has been to increase the authority of the heads of the individual Soviet enterprises, by giving them the right to spend money much more freely on things like factory renewals, materials, and even on the purchase of new machinery, without having to wait until the officials at the Ministry were ready to give them permission to do so. These arrangements continue. It was claimed by *Pravda* that in 1956 alone, as a result of these reforms which cut down the number of people needed to fill in forms asking for this and that, the factories and enterprises were able to get rid of no fewer than 200,000 administrative and clerical workers.

The question that one is naturally led to ask is whether this process of devolution from the centre—first of all, out to the regions, and then down to the individual Soviet factory—is going to go further. Are the workers in these factories going to be given a say in their management and in the distribution of the money which the factories earn—on the lines of the Yugoslav experiment in industrial democracy? I happened to meet the Yugoslav theorist of the new Marxism, Moshe Pijade, when he was in London recently just before he died. He asserted roundly that the logic of economic and social fact would drive the Russians in this direction, whether they liked it or not.

But this is not what the Russians themselves think. Nor, incidentally, do the Poles, who have been carrying out the same policy of economic decentralisation with their own characteristic verve. They are far from admiring the results of the Yugoslav experiment. On the contrary, they take the view that the loosening of the iron control over wages makes effective central planning of the economy well-nigh impossible. Control of what the Soviet economists call the Wages Fund—that is, the total amount of purchasing power that goes out in the form of wages—is regarded as the linchpin of the whole system. It is characteristic that Mr. Gomulka, the new Prime Minister of Poland since the Russian puppets were thrown out last October, is just as insistent on this as anyone else. Probably his most important single action this year has been the decision, which he managed to push through the Polish parliament, to cancel all outstanding wage claims. These wage claims—resulting from a whole series of under-payments over a period of years—are one of the most explosive issues of Polish politics. Yet Mr. Gomulka knew that he must reassert control over the Wages Fund if any kind of Communist policy of controlled economic growth from the centre was to be carried through. There is as little room under Mr. Gomulka as under Stalin for genuinely independent trade unions.

### The Task of the Factory Manager

The conclusion is, therefore, that the policy of decentralisation will be pulled up short at the door of the factory manager's office. It is apparent that the Soviet leaders rely on the factory managers to use their new field of personal initiative to enlarge their output, to cut costs, and so increase the profits available for further expansion—but to hold in check any temptation to hand out a big bonus to the workers, and to hold it in check severely. A Polish economist who was visiting London the other day put the point to me very simply: every manager, he said, instinctively wants to expand his own business; he is not personally interested in the wages question.—*General Overseas Service*

## In Copenhagen

The level snow, that makes this city one  
Of undiscovered surfaces, has gone,  
And now the lime-green towers,  
Domes, and pinnacles and twisted spires  
Exclaim upon a black blue sky whose tragic flags are furled,  
Giving a pause of summer in this winter of our world.

The northern palace yards are large  
With sun. Each figured rooftop casts a wedge  
Of dark on which the formal statues stand  
In radiant abstraction: one extended hand  
Receives a dove that feathers the living word.  
The other hangs in shadow, lifeless on a naked sword.

For a moment now, behold  
The sun, the merchants' only lasting gold,  
That batters the havens and the lakes,  
Drenches each tree with green, and shakes  
The distant Sound with shoals of dancing bees  
That from the heavens' royal hive drop on the ambered seas.

The flowered city trembles with their weightless tread  
That lays a crown of golden dust upon each mortal head  
And tumbles the dazzled gardens of the deep  
Where heroes and their monsters wake from sleep.  
—O, soon, in every street throughout the sickened earth  
May life's undying love once more bring hope to birth,  
The sun's broad flags of red and white blow free  
To welcome peace, the summer's longed-for majesty!

JAMES KIRKUP



## The Indian Mutiny—II

## The Bengal Army and the Mutiny

By H. T. LAMBRICK

THE great convulsion generally known as the Indian Mutiny is open to various interpretations, and historians have traced contributory causes in almost every aspect of British rule in India during the preceding years. But at least it is agreed that the outbreak began as a military revolt, and that it continued so predominantly; so a closer look at the background of the contemporary Indian armies should at least show how the affair took its first shape.

At the beginning of 1857, the Honourable East India Company's regular Indian troops, not counting Artillery and Engineers, were constituted as follows. The Bengal Army: ten regiments of Light Cavalry, seventy-four regiments of Native infantry; the Madras Army: eight Cavalry, fifty-two Infantry; and the Bombay Army: three Cavalry, twenty-nine Infantry. In September 1858, when the 'Sepoy War' was all but over, the returns showed the same figures for the armies of Madras and Bombay; but the ten cavalry regiments of the Bengal Army had disappeared and of its seventy-four infantry regiments only seven remained in existence. In other words, eleven-twelfths of the Indian units of the Bengal Army, which had comprised little less than half the Company's regular Indian troops, had ceased to exist, while the Madras and Bombay Armies emerged unimpaired.

Not all of these seventy-seven Bengal regiments which had disappeared from the roll had actually mutinied. A considerable number were disarmed and disbanded in anticipation of their joining in rebellion. Nor had the other two armies altogether escaped similar outbreaks. One Madras and two Bombay regiments had mutinied either wholly or in part, were broken up and their regimental numbers allotted to other units. Nevertheless, the Mutiny of 1857 was essentially a rebellion of the regular sepoys of the Bengal Army and not of the Company's Indian troops in general. The questions arise, why was that particular army almost completely pervaded by a mutinous spirit; and seeing that it was so, why did the other two armies of the Company remain almost completely loyal and, more, co-

operate heartily (when trusted) in fighting the mutineers?

There had previously been mutinies among John Company's troops, both European and Indian. The most violent and extensive outbreak by Indian troops had been in the Madras Army at Vellore in 1806 and involved the massacre of over 100 British soldiers. Its immediate cause was a stupid innovation in dress which the sepoys, always credulous, were led to believe was the first step in a sinister plan for their forcible conversion to Christianity. These fears were exploited by the dispossessed Muslim princes of Mysore, who hoped to ride to their old kingdom on the back of the rebellion. In suppressing this rising British troops were aided by an Indian regiment.

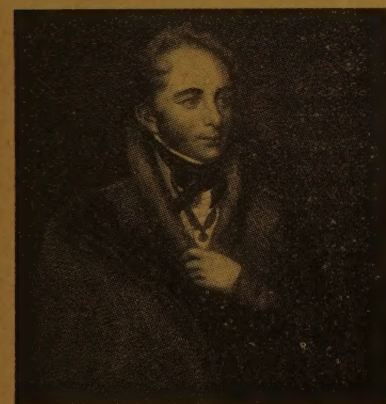
The next serious mutiny was in 1824, in a Bengal regiment ordered for service in the war against Burma. The sepoys, disturbed by rumours of disaster there, refused to march unless they were given extra pay. The regiment was confronted with British troops including artillery, and again ordered to march. They refused; the guns, which they did not know were loaded, opened fire on them; and after the massacre a number of the survivors were court-martialled. This savage vengeance produced deep ill-feeling in the Bengal Army, and a few months later regiments in Burma went to the verge of mutiny before consenting to join British and Madras troops in fatigues which, the Bengalis protested, were not fit duty for high-caste soldiers.

These affairs, considered together, give the pattern for 1857. I must emphasise, however, that these outbreaks had been unusual aberrations during seventy years or more of devoted service, often performed under the most trying conditions. Until 1824 it could be held that Bengal, Madras, and Bombay men had proved equally excellent soldiers and in actual fighting there was little to choose between them later still. There had always been a healthy rivalry between them. The Bengal Army claimed pre-eminence, and the Governor-General's particular association with that Presidency inclined him to prescribe to Bombay and Madras 'assimilation with the practice of Bengal' in much detail of military administration. But these governments, while often forced to conform to the letter of Bengal, fortunately preserved their armies' individual spirit and tradition.

The secret of controlling the Indian soldier remained the same as in the early days. His conduct depended primarily on the degree of mutual attachment and understanding between him and his British officers, and on the latter's power of command. Of this Sir John Malcolm, a Madras officer who had served with all three



Bengal Infantry (Light Company, 65th Regiment) in full dress uniform: an engraving from Ackermann's *Costumes of the Indian Army*, 1846  
W. T. Spencer



'Picture Post' Library



The fortress at Vellore, Madras, where the mutiny by Indian troops of the Madras Army in 1806 resulted in the massacre of over 100 British soldiers. Inset, above: Major-General Sir Robert Gillespie, who suppressed the rising



armies, had written in 1816: 'It is by treating the sepoys with kindness and consideration, by stimulating their pride, and by attending in the most minute manner to their feelings and prejudices, that we can command . . . their lives through the medium of their affections'; so long as this continued, he said, 'our empire may be considered as secure'. And again, writing in 1832: 'That empire has been acquired, and must be maintained, by the sword . . . We may by good government diminish the elements of sedition . . . but we never can expect active support in the hour of danger from the mass of the population of India . . . It is therefore to the army of India we must look for the means we possess, not only of maintaining our power, but of preserving the great benefits we have already conferred, or may hereafter confer, upon the millions subject to our authority'. The fatal error, in his view, which might make the Indian soldier instrumental to the destruction of his masters, would be 'confiding too exclusively in our European Troops and undervaluing our Native Army'.

### The Sepoy's Feelings and Prejudices

We have seen that Malcolm advocated 'attending in the most minute manner' to the sepoy's feelings and prejudices. But in another state paper written in 1832 he remarked: 'There are no prejudices and pretensions that will be found so injurious, if not resisted, as those minor ones of caste, if they receive more attention than is due to them'. He doubtless had in mind recent developments in the Bengal Army, and urged as the remedy that all possible should be done to make command of a corps of Indian soldiers the most desirable appointment for a Company's officer to hold. British officers who were prepared to make their Indian regiment their home would learn to distinguish the genuine from the factitious prejudices of their sepoys, and foster regimental pride in place of pride of caste—as indeed was the rule in Bombay.

In the early days of the Sepoy Army, British officers had been posted to Indian regiments by selection from the cadre of the Company's European regiments. The allotment was only a handful, so the Indian officers of the corps commanded Companies and Squadrons, and were well paid. After 1796 British officers were appointed directly to Indian regiments and in increased numbers: the native officers were degraded correspondingly. The boy Ensign newly joined from Europe ranked above the Subadar Major. These British officers, appointed at hazard, took their rank by seniority. There was no purchase, as in the Royal Army, so promotion was very slow: an officer might have to serve forty years before attaining command of his regiment.

There was thus a strong tendency in the opposite direction from that desired by Malcolm. The ten years 1815-1825 had seen widespread territorial expansion of British India, which had created an incessant demand for the services of army officers in a variety of civil appointments, as administrators, diplomatists, policemen, engineers and surveyors. Such posts had to be filled by picked men, relatively well paid. The result, in Malcolm's own words, was that only the 'refuse' were left for regimental duty. A reorganisation of the Company's armies in 1824 had also tended to loosen the powerful regimental bond between the British officer and the sepoy.

More than twelve years of peace followed: years of retrenchment and reform. Lord William Bentinck, governor-general from 1828 to 1835, may be given the main credit for laying the foundations of modern India. But the mark he left on the Indian armies was unfortunate. Among his retrenchments was a reduction of the British officer's allowances, which imparted an added impulse to get away from the regiment to staff or civil employ. The Indian troops' pay was untouched, so the sepoy might crow over the humiliation of his Captain. Then the punishment of flogging was abolished for Indian troops but retained for the European soldier. So again the sepoy was led to suppose that he was in a privileged position—even that the government was afraid of him.

On the other hand the Indian soldier was becoming increasingly suspicious of government's ulterior intentions towards himself. He saw Christian missionaries encouraged, and this revived the idea which had led to the explosion at Vellore—that the English had a scheme for undermining the institution of caste and forcing all to become Christians. This fear spread through Bengal, where missionaries were most numerous, and it was probably as a sort of instinctive defence against the supposed threat that the sepoy of that army tended to become ever more of a stickler for his caste rights, to the detriment of discipline.

In 1837, the last of the twelve peaceful years, Sir Charles Metcalfe, of the Company's Civil Service, recorded his views on the situation in India. He had lately officiated for almost a year as Governor-General. 'We are to all appearance more powerful in India than we ever were:

nevertheless our downfall may be short work . . . the cause of this precariousness is that our power does not rest on actual strength, but upon impression . . . we have ceased to be the wonder we were to the natives: our greatest danger is not from a Russian Army, but the fading of the impression of our invincibility from the minds of the Native inhabitants of India'.

This proved to be prophetic. It was decided next year to invade Afghanistan to forestall Russian aggression, and in the course of four years' operations a number of local reverses were sustained, culminating in the annihilation of an entire army. The sepoy saw European troops behave ill: and when orders were given for an 'army of retribution' to reinvade the country it was touch and go whether the Bengal regiments so ordered would obey. They were persuaded, the advance was successful, but followed by complete evacuation. This Afghan failure was devastating to the Company's prestige—that *iqbal* the influence of which had been so potent in maintaining the sepoy's morale. In these campaigns Bombay troops had also served, and emerged with enhanced credit. For the most part the Bengal regiments did well in the actual fighting.

Then followed the war in Sind, brought about in large measure by the Governor-General's feeling that a victory was required to re-establish the confidence of the army. This war was fought principally by Bombay troops. Unfortunately, it was decided to annex the country and it had to be garrisoned. The first plan was to assign this duty to the Bengal Army. But the sepoy of Bengal looked on Sind as a country beyond the bounds of India, and demanded the same allowances as he had received when serving there while the Afghan war was in progress. This was refused and three Bengal regiments mutinied on receiving orders to march to Sind. Another was prevailed upon to march, on a misunderstanding of the terms of service, but after reaching Sind mutinied when the expected allowances were not forthcoming. The sepoys were honestly convinced that they were victims of a breach of faith by the government. As the punishments inflicted were relatively light, and Bengal troops were not thereafter called upon to serve in Sind, they could claim to have defeated their masters. Two Madras regiments also succeeded, by a firm demonstration of their will to resist, in obtaining the cancellation of orders to serve in the dreaded province.

These, the sole instances of concerted insubordination by Madras troops since Vellore, had no effect on the general tone of that army. As to the Bombay Army, mutiny was unknown before 1857.

From the year 1844 Bengal sepoys were not to be depended upon. In the first Sikh war, in which they were the only Indian troops engaged, the British soldier had to do much more than his fair share of the fighting. Sir Henry Hardinge, whose first experience it was of sepoys in the field, wrote privately: 'I am rather disappointed in their style of fighting'. In the second Sikh war troops of the Bombay Army again served, and were shocked by the indiscipline of the Bengal sepoys. At the siege of Multan these made good their old claim to exemption from entrenching fatigues, but consented to stand on guard while their comrades of Bombay and English soldiers did the digging. With the end of the war the Punjab was annexed, and duty in that country no longer counted as foreign service entitling the sepoy to extra pay. It was the Sind business over again; several Bengal regiments ordered to garrison in the Punjab refused to take their ordinary pay and one attempted to seize the fort at Govindgarh.

### The Pamphlets by 'a Bombay Officer'

Meanwhile, early in 1850 appeared the first of the pamphlets by 'a Bombay Officer'—John Jacob—denouncing the organisation of the Bengal Army. Its normal state, he declared, was 'such as must appear to an officer of the Royal or of the Bombay Army as a state of mutiny'. The reasons for its 'total absence of discipline' was chiefly the excessive deference paid to caste, particularly by the British officers, and the system of promotion of the Indian soldiers strictly by seniority. The result of this rule was that Indian officers were appointed without regard to their fitness to hold commissions and were usually worn out before they received them, when their sole object was to enjoy a quiet life. Jacob declared in conclusion: 'There is more danger to our Indian Empire from the state of the Bengal Army, from the feeling which there exists between the Native and the European, and thence spreads throughout the length and breadth of the land, than from all other causes combined. Let Government look to this'.

Jacob had arraigned the British officers of the Bengal Army for fostering its gross faults, and Sir Charles Napier's last order as Commander-in-Chief shows that their general tone was unsatisfactory. Jacob



next drew attention to a third most important cause of indiscipline—the want of power vested in the regimental commanding officer. The sepoy was now allowed and encouraged by the Supreme Government to forward his complaints direct to army headquarters. As for examples of the pernicious influence of caste in the Bengal Army: a commanding officer felt bound to dismiss a good soldier if the man's comrades discovered that he was of inferior caste: the Indian cavalry trooper 'could not' unsaddle or groom his horse because that was work for the groom: the sentry refused to strike the gong at the quarter-guard, so special gong-strikers had to be employed by the government.

There were none of these absurdities in the Bombay Army. Yet fully half of the Indian soldiers of Bombay were drawn from the same areas and same classes as filled the Bengal Army—Brahmins, Rajputs, and Muslims of Oudh and the districts round Delhi. This had been the practice for thirty years past. But in Bombay, and also in Madras where the Army was recruited almost entirely from its own territories, promotion from the ranks and for each grade of Indian officer was by selection, not seniority; and caste was completely at a discount. An Oudh

Brahmin in a Bombay regiment would cheerfully serve under an 'untouchable' Indian officer, who would not have been admitted to the ranks in Bengal.

Jacob's pamphlets made an immense stir. Bengal officers, with the notable exception of Henry Lawrence, indignantly repelled his proposals for reforming their army; yet Thomas Seaton, returning in 1855 to take command of his old regiment after ten years' absence, was appalled by the deterioration he found—due, as Jacob had asserted, to curtailment of commanding officers' powers. Lord Dalhousie recognised that the condition of the Bengal Army was bad throughout, but was perplexed by conflicting advice how to deal with the problem, and so did not recommend any radical change in its organisation.

Thus for some years before 1857 it was certain that under any extraordinary strain the Army of Bengal, which was then garrisoning the whole of northern India from Peshawur to Chittagong, would be found wanting if no worse. That in the event it was so much worse was due to the impact, on an accumulation of many untoward influences, of a fatal coincidence of mishaps in that particular year.

—Third Programme

## Must Western Science Decline?

By G. BURNISTON BROWN

SOME students of history, notably Spengler and Toynbee, have claimed that all cultures show a certain pattern of growth and decay, and that it is possible to pick out comparable stages in each. There are many who do not agree with Spengler and Toynbee; there are also many who, while admitting that their works are not free from error and a certain amount of distortion, feel that what remains is still worthy of consideration.

But even among those who agree that art-forms are bound to follow the cycle of birth and decay, there are some who think that science is an exception. Science, they say, is a method which has been proved to lead us to more and more reliable knowledge of the world round us. Why, then, should it ever be abandoned? Granted that, in the culture of ancient Greece, the statue exhibited to perfection the Greek infatuation with form and the harmonious relationships of lines, surfaces and volumes, and was incapable of further development—granted that, in our later culture, the art of oil painting together with the conquest of perspective drawing, aided by clouds and shadows and peeps of distant landscapes, exhausted the possibilities of representation of bodies in infinite space, leaving only the possibility of little tricks and stunts which we see round us so painfully today—granted all this and much more besides, nevertheless, science, they say, is different: its possibilities cannot be exhausted, for the vast intricacies and detail of Nature will provide scope for its progress for centuries to come. Is this optimistic view of the progress of science justified?

Science is a method of obtaining knowledge of Nature which developed in western Europe round about the time of Newton. It starts by using careful observation and experiment to establish various generalisations or laws, and then proceeds by means of hypotheses to their explanation. From these hypotheses, logical or mathematical deductions are made, and further experiments carried out to test the deductions: these may cause the theory to be modified, after which fresh deductions are made which have, in their turn, to be tested by experiment. I am concerned principally with scientific method as applied to physics, but since the study of matter and its interactions is fundamental, any decline in its progress would affect other fields in which scientific method is used.

Newton stated clearly what the object of physics is: 'Our business', he said, 'is with the causes of sensible effects'. Physicists are not solipsists, that is to say, they believe there is an external world which produces the sensations which we all receive through our various sense organs, and thus the physical universe is defined as the supposed external cause of the sensations. The aim of physicists is to describe this external world, and the description that proved most satisfactory was that the observable phenomena of Nature could be explained causally in terms of unchangeable material particles whose structures and motions could be described in the language of geometry, together with forces or interactions between them. All changes in Nature are the result of

separations, associations and motions of these permanent particles caused by the forces between them.

Since Newton's time, the development of electromagnetism and optics led to the hypothesis of an ether surrounding and penetrating bodies. Although a material of some kind, this ether had to possess properties very unlike those of known matter. It was invented to account for interactions between bodies at a distance, which we are familiar with in optical effects and also in radio. This dynamic western view of Nature was the result of the development of physics up to about the middle of the last century, and despite certain difficulties, it had immense and really impressive successes. But about this time a certain tendency arose which I shall now try to describe, a tendency which, I am inclined to think, might, if it increases, ultimately destroy science. This tendency derives from the application of mathematics to physics.

Newton explained the function of mathematics in physics: it was to demonstrate—we should now say prove—the conclusions which followed from the metrical expression of a physical theory. For example, in the case of mechanics and astronomy, Newton derived from observation and experiment the laws of motion which he used as postulates, and to which he added universal gravitation, namely, that all particles attract one another with a force that decreases with distance. He then found the metrical expression, or gravitational formula, from experiment. He did not do it directly by measuring the force at different distances between lumps of lead, as Cavendish did later, but rather more indirectly: he used mathematics to work out the orbits in which planets would move, using different formulae for the force, and chose the inverse-square formula because it provided elliptical orbits with the Sun in one focus, and this he knew, from Kepler's laws, to be the case.

Then the rest of the *Principia* consists of conclusions, drawn from the physical theory by means of logic, and from the formula by means of mathematics. For example, logic tells us that if all particles attract, then the Sun and Moon must attract the sea; and mathematics allowed Newton to find the ratio of the tide-raising force of the Sun and Moon from the heights of the tides in the Bristol Channel. Thus, according to Newton, logic and mathematics are tools in science and nothing more: for him 'all the difficulty of philosophy seems to consist in this—from the phenomena of motions to investigate the forces of Nature, and then from these forces to demonstrate the other phenomena'.

The theory of universal gravitation provided work for generations of mathematicians, and it was Lagrange who, to make the long and difficult calculations easier, invented a mathematical function which he called 'potential'. This later became 'potential energy'. This term 'energy', which was completely unknown to Newton, has had a remarkable history. According to the late Sir Edmund Whittaker, the term 'kinetic energy' first appeared in 1862 in an article by William Thomson (later Lord Kelvin) and P. G. Tait in a periodical called *Good Words*, edited by Charles Dickens. Certainly it has turned out



to be a 'good word', if by that we mean one that has risen from humble origins to become what Spengler calls the Great Myth of Western Science. Kinetic energy is defined as  $\frac{1}{2}mv^2$  where  $m$  is the mass of the particle and  $v$  is its velocity; it is, therefore, in any actual case, the product of some numbers obtained by measurement—a term obtained in a way similar to the product man-hours. The mathematical functions potential and kinetic energy, together with another one called 'action' have enabled mathematical generalisations of great beauty, economy, and power to be developed. With their help, mechanical problems can be dealt with in a very general way. This is often a great advantage in the process of mathematical deduction, and if their use had stopped there, no cause for criticism would arise. Unfortunately, however, these mathematical functions have come to be spoken of as causal agents—indeed, some writers call energy a substance!

### The Mathematicians and the Ether

Returning now to the ether. This tenuous substance had, as we have seen, to be supposed to have properties very unlike known materials, and consequently a temptation arose among mathematicians to use the methods we have just mentioned in order to treat its behaviour in a general way without attempting to describe its exact mechanical action. Let us see how they excused themselves. George Green said in 1838:

We are so perfectly ignorant of the mode of action of the elements of the luminiferous ether on each other, that it would seem a safer method to take some general physical principle as the basis of our reasoning, rather than assume certain modes of action, which, after all, may be widely different from the mechanism employed by Nature; more especially if this principle . . . lead to a much more simple process of calculation.

Sir George Airy, the Astronomer Royal, went further, referring to his mathematical equations as

[not] giving a mechanical explanation of the phenomena, but as showing that the phenomena may be explained by equations, which equations appear to be such as might possibly be deduced from some plausible mechanical assumption, although no such assumption has yet been made.

These quotations show clearly the origin of the idea that physical phenomena can be *explained* by equations, without reference to bodies, forces, and motions. It is this period in the history of science that we must regard as the beginning of a new attitude to the role of mathematics in physics. This has led in recent times to the theory of relativity, wave-mechanics, the extraordinary work of Eddington, and Milne's kinematic relativity—all developments guided very much by mathematical conceptions the physical meaning of which is, to say the least, obscure. Jeans went so far as to assert that we live in a mathematical universe and that the Great Architect of it was a mathematician. Modern exponents of this view of science have abandoned any attempt at causal explanation: they are satisfied if, by analogy and mathematical artifice, a formula can be found which yields correct relations between the results of experimental measurements, and which, when suitably interpreted in physical terms, may be said to predict the existence of some particle or interaction in the physical world. Attempts to support this attitude to science have been made by declaring that the sole purpose of scientific method is to establish correlations between phenomena and not to explain them. This would raise formula-finding to a supreme position in science, and naturally appeals to the mathematically minded.

Professor André Mercier sums up fifty years of the theory of relativity in this way:

I should like to stress the importance which *reason* has had in the acceptance of the theory of relativity. . . . The dignity of pure theoretical speculation has been rehabilitated: not in the form of an arbitrary speculation, but based on a process of the mind with its own justification which I should like to call the 'experience' of the theory. . . . Despite these remarks it is not to be concluded that general relativity has no experimental background whatever. It is not merely an empirical science, though it is not pure mathematics; it is the prototype of that theoretical endeavour which is one of the characteristic features of our scientific century. For this reason, Einstein is largely responsible for the moulding of contemporary thought.

He goes on to say that relativity

has saved science from narrow experimentalism, it has emphasised the part which beauty and simplicity must play in the formulation of theories of the nature of the physical world. . . . Models are no longer plainly mechanical: mathematics is the store where models are to be found, so mathematical abstraction is a necessary source even of positive knowledge.

Here we see a new kind of theoretical scientist, guided by reason, by beauty, by simplicity, and by the experience of processes of his own mind which are their own justification! Newton's mistrust of deductive reasoning unless confirmed by experiment and his continual demand for more experiments is now called 'narrow experimentalism'. The whole history of science shows that this philosophy is false: reason, beauty, and simplicity, are not sure guides to Nature's ways.

But surely, you will say, there must have been some protest? A few mathematicians, it is true, have felt disquieted. Poincaré, for instance, said:

The mathematical method, by its apparent rigour and inflexible course, often inspires in us a confidence nothing warrants and prevents our looking about us.

More recently, J. A. Schouten, Professor of Mathematics at Amsterdam University, at the end of a paper on meson fields, has this to say:

Only a physicist, using the results of experiments, is able to make the right choice from the overwhelming number of possibilities. A mathematician is too much interested in the beauty of his constructions, and in mathematical physics, this leads too often to formalism. There exist very few scientific men that are at the same time mathematician and physicist. For these children of the gods no rules exist, but as a matter of fact, ordinary mathematicians have seldom booked much success by meddling with physics, unless they succeeded in making some good physicist so very angry that he was stimulated to take over the job and finish it properly.

Physicists themselves have made little protest, but Lord Rutherford was characteristically outspoken: of Planck's work he said:

I was rather struck in Brussels by the fact that Continental people do not seem to be in the least interested to form a physical idea as a basis of Planck's theory. They are quite content to explain everything on a certain assumption and do not worry their heads about the real cause of a thing. I must, I think, say that the English point of view is much more physical and much to be preferred.

And when Professor Wien, after trying unsuccessfully to convince Rutherford of the splendours of relativity, cried in despair: 'No Anglo-Saxon can understand relativity', Rutherford laughed and said: 'No, they have too much sense'.

Why did the greatest physicist of our time say we had too much sense? I think that he was expressing what many physicists feel instinctively; namely, that the theory of relativity is not a genuine physical theory, for it starts with postulates about relations between moving observers' measurements, and this evades the physical problem as to what property we must suppose the external world to have which would cause observers' measurements to have this relation. Relations between measurements are derived as conclusions from a genuine physical theory—they cannot be postulates. Physicists are not primarily concerned with observers and their measurements but with what the observers observe and what the measurements measure. No doubt, too, Rutherford would have guffawed at the tortuous interpretations of a piece of algebra, of which we have had an amusing example in recent months: two learned professors arguing as to whether or not you will be younger after travelling on a space rocket. Their interpretations differed, and the argument ended inconclusively in thinly veiled abuse.

### Chance, Chaos, and Probability

Despite these warnings, however, belief in the power of mathematics continues to grow. Obscure notions like chance, chaos, and probability, which some writers openly admit are incapable of clear definition, are now much in evidence, and statistical treatments appear to be accepted as substitutes for the experimental search for causes, in the biological sciences and psychology as well as in physics. If reliance on mathematics continues to increase; if we come to agree with Jeans that 'the methods of the mathematician can give us a full and final answer, while those of the experimentalists only give a partial answer', and if we accept Mercier's view that mathematics is the necessary source of positive knowledge—which would be to repeat, as Whitehead saw long ago, the errors of the logicians of the Middle Ages—then a decline in interest in observation and experiment is bound to follow, and this would affect all the sciences.

I do not, myself, agree that Newtonian method must be abandoned. I still think that our business is with the causes of sensible effects, and I should be reluctant to agree with Spengler that the decline of western science is inevitable; but it is impossible to ignore the developments which I have described, which do appear to give some support to his thesis.—*Third Programme*



# From Empire to Commonwealth

By SIR HILARY BLOOD

IF you walk along Northumberland Avenue towards the Thames you will pass, on the left-hand side about three-quarters of the way down, a large building with a long façade of Portland stone. The entrance looks much like the entrance to many a London club, and the building is a club, providing for its members, irrespective of their race, colour, or religion, the facilities which any good social club does provide. But it is much more: it is the headquarters of the Royal Empire Society, dedicated to the diffusion of knowledge regarding the Empire and Commonwealth, and concerned to promote good relationships between the United Kingdom, her sister sovereign states, and the dependent territories.

Empire and Commonwealth, Empire to Commonwealth—there are many centuries of history in those phrases: the first Empire, beginning—you might say—with the colonisation of Virginia 350 years ago, and ending with the American revolution; the second Empire, from the conquest of Canada and India up to the passing of the statute of Westminster in 1931. Both of these were conceived largely in terms of the classical or conventional empires of the past. And now, the Commonwealth of Nations, a new creation, peculiar to the British people.

## The Men with Vision

A hundred years or so ago the British people, the man in the street, knew little or nothing about the colonies, and there grew a disposition to grumble at the heavy cost of the Empire. The idea became prevalent that Britain had no interest in preserving the links with her colonies, and need therefore make no sacrifice for them. The grant of responsible government would eventually lead to separation anyway—and, thought many people, a good riddance too. This 'separatist' view was held by many well known people, such as Goldwin Smith and John Bright and others. By contrast, there was also the more conventional view of colonies—that they should remain areas to which surplus British population and capital could be exported, potential customers for trade, potential fields for investment, all with a view to home profit in the future. But there were those who were neither separatists nor commercially minded; men who had caught just a glimpse of the vision of a free association of territories making up an Empire, the faint dawn of our modern concept of Commonwealth. To clarify this vision and to make it communicable to others required, above all things, knowledge. A hundred years ago communication with Australia, for example, was by clipper via the Cape, and on the west coast of Africa governors sometimes died before their dispatches were answered. It is hardly surprising that there was ignorance about colonial affairs.

This was the situation faced by a small group of men who for some years met regularly to discuss Empire problems and ways of overcoming them. In 1868 they decided to form a society—the Colonial Society—for this very purpose. Mr. Gladstone attended the inaugural banquet and gave the Society his blessing in an after-dinner speech. The Society's aims were primarily to combat separatist tendencies and to promote the unity and welfare of the Empire by every means in its power. It was non-party and non-sectarian. The Society occupied two rooms in Suffolk Street, Pall Mall. A year or so later the prefix 'Royal' was graciously allowed, and the Society became the Royal Colonial Institute. Funds were low, and in 1870 the Institute had to move to what was later described as a 'pokey hole over a shirtshop' at No. 15 Strand. But the 'pokey hole' saw the beginning of a library now famous for its unique collection of over 250,000 volumes and pamphlets.

Then, in the eighteen-eighties, came an important advance. Northumberland Avenue had just been laid out, and the Institute bought a site there and built its first permanent home. Here it flourished, and by 1928—when it became the Royal Empire Society—the great problem was room. So the present building came into existence. It was opened by His late Majesty and the Queen Mother, then Duke and Duchess of York, in 1936. This is the building, badly damaged by enemy action during the war, whose restoration the Royal Empire Society is now celebrating by its festival.

Within a few years of its foundation in 1868, the new Society began to become a power both at home and overseas. Working on the theme that the Empire should benefit all its members economically and strategically, it can claim a considerable share in the change which marked Empire relationships in the latter part of the nineteenth century. From it came the first suggestion—in Queen Victoria's Jubilee Year—for a meeting in London of Empire Ministers, some twenty years before ever such a meeting took place; and the Royal Colonial Institute's project for a reporter on trade products at the Colonial Office was the germ of the Department of Overseas Trade which still plays an important role in the Commonwealth today.

Empire to Commonwealth is a big jump. The concept of this country as only one of a number of sovereign states, free, equal and independent; the concept of the individual sovereignty of the member states, who remain in the Commonwealth because of their adherence to basic principles of freedom of thought and action implicit in common political institutions. For many people, these concepts are still new, but they follow from our ideas of freedom which have been expressed in the resolve to lead the dependent territories along the path to responsible self-government.

This new vision of an Empire merged and elevated into a Commonwealth, bound together by ties which are constitutionally weak but morally strong, does not only affect people in this country; it affects equally all citizens of the Commonwealth. Once again, changing circumstances and fast-moving events demand, above all, increasing knowledge. The Royal Empire Society is already equipped as an organisation to provide information and to exchange it over a great part of the Commonwealth. Of the Society's 28,000 members, no less than two out of every three live outside the United Kingdom. It has branches, not only in a number of towns in Britain, but overseas, *e.g.*, in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Ceylon, Rhodesia and Kenya. We at the headquarters of the Society are grateful for the valuable material contributions—particularly ornamental native timber—which the various Commonwealth countries have made towards the rebuilding. But the festival is intended to do more than celebrate that rebuilding: it is intended to recharge our batteries, to infuse fresh enthusiasm into our work.

As a Society we strive to take account of changing circumstances; of the fact that many of the territories we knew once as colonies are now or will shortly become sovereign states. We have watched with interest the plan to create the first internally self-governing state in the Commonwealth—Singapore—a constitutional device which may well establish a precedent for other territories unable for various reasons to achieve full sovereign status: in short, we are facing a concept of Commonwealth rather than of Empire. So it is not surprising that the Society has recently been much concerned with the fundamental questions of its name, and its objectives, not in the old colonial context of Great Britain and her possessions, but in the new Commonwealth context of sovereign members and of internally self-governing states.

## Understanding Our Friends

Old ideas die hard. Men and women who have given their lives in the service of the Empire as they knew it find this present period of readjustment very difficult. Arguments are none the less cogent for being based on emotion, and the concept of Empire is by no means everywhere exhausted. It remains still evocative. But surely the concept of Commonwealth can also be evocative. In the past we have dreamed our dreams, and many of them, in the Empire, came true. Now let us, with the young men, see our visions: visions of knowledge and understanding leading to friendship and common action among all who subscribe to our ideals and practices of freedom in the Commonwealth. This, I believe, is even more a call to service than was the creation of the Empire, this call to maintain and develop the Commonwealth. For you cannot know, in the sense of understanding, a man unless he is a friend. And you cannot keep him as a friend unless you are ready to give time and energy—to give of yourself, in fact—to knowing and understanding him.—*From a talk in the Home Service*



# The Listener

All communications should be addressed to the Editor of THE LISTENER, Broadcasting House, London, W.1. The articles in THE LISTENER consist mainly of the scripts (in whole or part) of broadcast talks. Original contributions are not invited, with the exception of poems and short stories up to 3,000 words, which should be accompanied by stamped and addressed envelopes. The reproductions of talks do not necessarily correspond verbatim with the broadcast scripts. Yearly subscription rate, U.S. and Canadian edition: \$7.50, including postage. Special rate for two years \$12.50; for three years \$17.00. Subscriptions should be sent to B.B.C. Publications, 35 Marylebone High Street, London, W.1, England, or to usual agents. Entered as second-class mailing matter at the Post Office, New York, N.Y. Trade distributors within U.S.A., The Eastern News Company, New York 14, N.Y.

## Publishing Problems

**F**ACTS elicited during the debate in the House of Commons on the press last Friday are a reminder of the present-day difficulties of publishing. So also is the news that our contemporary *Picture Post* is to cease publication. The lure of journalism still appeals to young people who do not realise its arduousness (though the lure is perhaps not as potent as once it was) but newspaper proprietors are harassed by the fickleness of readers and advertisers as well as the devastating increase in the cost of paper. Similarly many persons have ambitions to write, but only a limited number, it seems, are anxious to read. Book publishers are conscious of the pressure of inflation in a trade which can never be certain or stable. That is why a feature of the British book trade in recent years has been, as Mr. Edmund Penning-Rowsell pointed out in a recent talk in the B.B.C.'s European Service, a tendency towards amalgamation. Eyre and Spottiswoode has linked up with Methuen; Heinemann controls financially Peter Davies, Secker and Warburg, and Hart-Davis; Max Reinhardt has acquired Werner Laurie and the Bodley Head. Other publishers, established since the war, have disappeared altogether.

The reason for such amalgamations is largely that the capital expenditure needed for the publication of books (and of newspapers) as well as overhead costs and running costs have risen enormously since the pre-war era. The price of books, as publishers often remind us, has not risen in proportion to the increased price of paper and the cost of printing. Moreover since the demand for books and newspapers is by no means inelastic, it is not usually possible to raise the price of publications proportionately, although naturally some increases have become unavoidable. Whereas before the war a novel published at 7s. 6d. and selling about 2,000 copies might give a modest return to a publisher and bring a new author before the public, today it is hardly worth a publisher's while to take a book which he does not think will sell 5,000 copies and give him some sort of return on the £1,000 that he needs to invest not merely in printing and distributing the book but also in advertising it.

The bigger publishers of course still make a pretty good livelihood out of technical and educational works of one kind and another. Some firms contribute largely to our export trade, for after all this is still a world in which English is widely read. As the Minister of State, Board of Trade, pointed out the exports of books in 1956 were worth £20,000,000 in foreign currency. But there again publishers may be the victims of international events: the recent trouble in the Middle East, for example, damaged sales to Egypt and currency restrictions cause difficulties in other countries. Nor is it as easy as once it was to sell British books in the United States, where again publishers, confronted with heavy overhead costs, are reluctant to experiment with books that they do not feel are assured of a large market. Thus authors and journalists, except for a few exceptional or lucky ones, earn a precarious living in a society which may admire them but does not always patronise them. They alone among creative workers, one fancies, have not partaken liberally in the benefits of the post-war inflation. Indeed, to some extent they have been its victims. Yet without books, newspapers, and magazines of quality the world would be a poorer place. Readers of our present Summer Book Number will, we trust, not need to be reminded of the fact.

## What They Are Saying

Foreign broadcasts on world affairs

MR. MACMILLAN'S STATEMENT on Suez, the French decision to raise the Canal question in the Security Council, the meeting of King Feisal and King Saud in Baghdad, and the Arab support for Egypt in her declared intention to prevent Israeli ships using the Canal, all brought the Middle East again to the forefront of commentaries last week.

Discussing the French approach to the Security Council, the *Socialist Le Populaire* was quoted as saying:

May our friends abroad understand our anxiety. Going from concession to concession, this pseudo-realism drags the free world down the dangerous slope which once led to Munich, to the triumph of Hitler and to world war.

The independent left-wing *Combat*, however, asked who could blame Britain for recognising her true interests, and the left-wing *Franc-Tireur* thought it was too much to ask Britain to go on using the costly Cap route when other western nations were using the Canal on President Nasser's terms. From the U.S.A., the *New York Herald Tribune* was quoted as follows:

The West has suffered another painful demonstration of the impossibility of reasoning with an arrogant and power-thirsty dictator. Only force makes an impression on such people. And if power is lacking, or if the exercise of it is impractical, then there is no use in continued prattling that the United Nations can somehow win through with high-sounding principles.

The *New York Times* was quoted as saying:

If permitted to stand, this arrangement would, in effect, make western Europe economically and militarily the hostage of Nasser and through him of the Soviets. It is ironic that this stultifying result has been achieved under the leadership and pressure of both the U.N. and the U.S.A., which adopted a completely one-sided approach to the Suez crisis.

Indian newspapers were quoted as emphasising British realism. Israeli newspapers were very critical. *Davar* was quoted as saying that the British decision might suit the interests of British shipping, but it was against Britain's long-term interests, those of western Europe, and those of the entire Middle East.

Moscow broadcasts described Mr. Macmillan's statement as evidence of the 'complete capitulation of the British government . . . and the bankruptcy of a policy of force'. Cairo broadcasts emphasised the Egyptian 'victory' and the 'defeat of the imperialists', though *Al-Akhbar* was quoted as saying:

We have no wish to gloat over what some western newspapers describe as Britain's surrender. We feel it is to the credit of present British statesmanship to admit an error and try to rectify it. . . . We are ready to co-operate with those who admit their error.

*Al-Ahram* was quoted as saying:

Shipping companies, if asked to do so, would prefer to share in the cost of widening the Canal rather than . . . sailing round the African continent or constructing oil pipelines through what the West calls safe areas, meaning non-Arab countries. . . . Moreover, Arab oil-producing countries would never permit their oil to flow through Turkey or Israel.

The British nuclear test brought to a new climax the huge spate of Soviet propaganda in the past weeks against nuclear tests. Moscow broadcasts spoke of a 'wave of indignation and protest' in Britain where the movement for banning nuclear weapons and tests was said to be gaining momentum—as evidenced, for example, by a recent statement by Mr. Bevan, who had spoken of the U.S.S.R.'s 'moral leadership' in this connection. At the same time, Moscow and satellite broadcasts on the occasion of the anniversary of the Warsaw Treaty stressed the 'indomitable might' of the Pact—as recently demonstrated by the crushing of the 'counter-revolution' in Hungary, and the averting of war due to events in Egypt. An East German broadcast declared that 'the great camp of the Warsaw Treaty . . . possesses all the raw materials, reserves, and potential necessary for defensive war'.

The A.A. units use guided and homing rockets, and the Air Force jet fighters, rocket fighters and remote-controlled 'plane-borne rockets'. With manpower superiority and interior lines of communications, the Warsaw Treaty countries were 'invincible'.

Applauding Britain's nuclear test, the *New York Herald Tribune* was quoted as saying:

There is no question but that Britain's new nuclear capabilities strengthen the free world's deterrent to Soviet aggression.



# Did You Hear That?

## MAY 29 IS SHIG-SHAG DAY

'AS A CHILD', said BRIDGET WASTIE in 'Midlands Miscellany', 'I remember we always presented my mother with an oak-apple sprig tied with blue ribbon on May 29, which happened also to be her birthday. The generally accepted reason for celebrating this day is because it is the anniversary of the restoration of Charles II in 1660. But all kinds of other rites and mysteries have become confused with it and among the old people of Charlbury, where I live, some curious theories persist about Shig-Shag Day as they call it.

'First of all, why shig-shag or shick-shack? As every good botanist knows, the oak apple—that small round spongy brown ball which is found on oak trees—is really an abnormal growth set up by the irritation of the gall wasp when it pierces the young tissues in order to lay its eggs. These insects are known as "shig-shags". A country expression for anyone whether with an inaccessible itch or an unsatisfied urge is "'im proper 'ad the shig-shags".

'About a mile out of Charlbury on what is now the main Burford Road (but still called by locals the forest lane), standing back on the grassy verge is a venerable oak tree. This is so old that the trunk is a mere shell, yet each year the few gnarled boughs that remain put on a semblance of green. This say many of the older people roundabout is the tree in which Charles hid. Little do they care for the powerful claims of Boscobel or for dates. I remember an old man once showing me a few tattered pages of gold leaf. He told me this was used to gild the oak apples of Shig-Shag Day. "Those which came off the old tree along the forest lane were more prized than any of the others", he said. When I asked him why, he replied, "Well, folks do say as that be the tree as 'id the King y'know". I pictured the old oak in Charles' day set among the tangle and boscage of Wychwood Forest when what is now a tarmac road would be a narrow riding through the forest itself. From that point I turned to history. Charles had staunch Royalist supporters all round the district: Burford, Chastleton, and Cornbury.

'When in 1660 he "enjoyed his own again", both John Evelyn and Samuel Pepys mention Oxfordshire especially as taking a great part in the rejoicings. Pepys says: "May 29 1660. The day of the Restoration of King Charles II was observed in all places in England, especially in Oxon which did exceed any place of its bigness. The jollity of the day continued till next morning. The whole world of England it seemed had gone perfectly mad". At Chastleton two oaks were planted to be known henceforth as the Restoration Oaks. I can imagine our Charlbury oak being decked with blue ribbons by local folk as part of those rejoicings.

'May 29 continued to be observed for many years, but as time went on the ceremonies became more and more mixed up with the older traditions of this forest district. A story I was told of local shig-shag rites was the custom of going round to the houses of the gentry very early on the morning of May 29 and decorating the knocker or lintel with oak-apple sprays. The decorators would call later on in the day for a gift of money. If none were forthcoming, they would stand and chant:

Shig-shag—penny a rag  
Bang his head in Cromwell's bag  
Bad cess to this house come to stay  
Before next twenty-ninth of May.

'It appears everyone wore an oak apple on this day, the more commercially minded gilding them and tying them with blue ribbon and going from door to door selling them. At twelve o'clock noon an



Date palms and springs in the oasis of Siwa

ash sprig was added to the oak spray and both were worn together until evening, when both were discarded and the day ended in general jollification'.

## CHANGING SIWA

'I went to Siwa in December', said WINIFRED HOLMES in a Home Service talk. 'It was the first real oasis I had ever been to and it had everything I had expected an oasis to have—blue water, green palm-groves, juicy dates to eat, and a handsome sheikh in flowing robes whose wives were secluded in the harem.

'The way Alexander went, over 2,000 years ago, was the way we went, by an ancient caravan route running inland south-west from Mersa Matruh on the Mediterranean coast. Two hundred or more miles of it are across a barren desert plateau without shade or water. On and on we bumped and crashed, hour after hour, but at last, in front of us, we saw the conical hill of Siwa town; crowned and plastered with houses jumbled higgledy-piggledy, semi-skyscrapers several storeys high.

'For centuries the Siwans lived here, locked in at night when the gates in the fortified walls were shut. The salty mud of the oasis is porous: normally Siwa has no rainfall, so no one worried about this until, in 1928, there was a cloud-burst. The houses literally melted and most people had to abandon their old homes and build new ones on the flat ground round the rock.

'The Siwans are chiefly Berber by race, not Egyptian. They speak Siwi, but they learn Arabic in school. Until 1820 the



Siwan girls wearing the traditional hair styles

Photographs: J. B. Holmes



oasis was an independent sheikdom. Men and boys, tall, light-skinned, fine-featured, clustered round our first Siwan spring. There are 200 springs in use now, but in Siwa's heyday in Roman times the ancient sources say there were 1,000. The water is artesian and it bubbles up, clear and fresh and sweet, from some mysterious source deep in the ground. The springs are built into round pools with a low parapet so that people can draw water from them easily. They love diving into their blue depths.

'On this first evening of our entry into Siwa we were greeted with frowns and scowls. Dark eyes glinted at us from chinked doorways, and a woman slunk past, shrouded in a blue-grey cloth which she held over her face so that only an eye could be seen. But until a girl is married—at fourteen or so—she can go about freely. Outside one house a couple of girls of about eleven, dressed in blue and black-striped dresses with big black kimono-like sleeves, were playing hop-scotch in the sand. Their silver ornaments jangled and the tight little plaits, looped about their ears and drawn over their heads, jiggled up and down. This "hair-do" tells the world that a girl's father is ready to receive offers of marriage for her. It is done by a professional hair-dresser who goes from house to house when called for. You can see hair like this in the portrait reliefs of princesses and dancers in the royal tombs at Luxor.

'Then, like an explosion, a radio blared out: brassy Arabic orchestra, throaty cabaret voice — contemporary Egypt was here. Egypt of the revolution is very much present in Siwa. At the Rest House, the Mamur came to call. He was a typical young army officer of Colonel Nasser's regime: energetic, self-confident, brash. He spoke enthusiastically of the Government's plans for the oasis and told us we must see the school, the hospital, and the irrigation and land-reclamation work.

'We saw the school and met the school-teacher, a young man, homesick for Cairo, but keen enough on his job here. It seemed to me that he was doing a very good one, too. The doctor, an older, more disillusioned man, told me that malaria, once the scourge of the oasis, had been stamped out. But there is a good deal of tuberculosis and pneumonia among the women, owing to their unhealthy life. "We are supposed to be changing their habits and customs", he said in a moment of frankness over glasses of sweet, spiced tea at Sheikh Ali's house, "but everything we do is subtly opposed. Look at Sheikh Ali: he is the richest man in Siwa, he owns the best land and the best date and olive trees. He employs land-less men and he pays them practically nothing. He has had many wives—there are two or three shut in up there now. And he won't change".

'To get perspective and to recapture some of the magic I went to the ruined acropolis of the Temple of the Oracle. Only a few surrounding walls and arches remain and the cella itself—the heart of the temple—but as I stood there I felt strangely moved. Here Alexander stood and heard the oracle's pronouncement. But unkind time has revealed the oracle's secret mechanics. The falls of stone have opened up a narrow gallery running along between the outer wall and the inner one of the cella, just wide enough to squeeze along. There are two holes in the stone through which the voice of the hidden sybil could be mysteriously heard by the suppliant waiting inside'.

## THE END OF LOWTHER CASTLE

'A century and more ago', said ROGER FULFORD in a North of England Home Service talk, 'the poet Wordsworth passed Lowther Castle on his way back to his home in Westmorland after a holiday in Scotland. He

knew it well—outside as a conspicuous mark on the landscape and inside as a centre of hospitality for him and his circle of friends. But something struck him anew about the castle that day, and he gave expression to his feeling in the famous sonnet about Lowther Castle. You may recall the idea with which the poem ends. He says that if the towers and pinnacles of Lowther were ever to fall, history "Will say, ye disappeared with England's Glory".

'The castle is now in the breaker's hands, and except for a few flats round the stable yard it will cease to exist as a human habitation. In a few months just the outer shell—roofless and with all its rooms obliterated—will stand to remind mankind of where this mighty building once stood. Whether England's glory has disappeared likewise is a matter of controversy—those are stormy waters on which I shall not embark. But I think that we should all probably agree on this—the removal of Lowther Castle means the end of a piece of history.

'At the close of the seventeenth century—that is the late Jacobean period of taste—the then owner of Lowther built a fine house, and he explained that he did this in order to tempt his successors to make it their home. That was the old Lowther Hall and it was unluckily burned almost to the ground twenty years later. In the seventy-five years after

the fire and before the castle was built the family lived in the surviving wing of this Hall. Many plans were made for the rebuilding throughout the eighteenth century but nothing was done till 1807. In that year the architect Smirke was called in to plan something on the grandest scale, and the first stone was laid in January 1808. Obviously Smirke, looking back to the antiquity of the family and looking round to the glories of the landscape, decided that nothing less than a castle would do.

'When I paid my last respects to the

castle on the last day it was open to the public, at the end of March, I heard someone say in those loud, rather confident tones we often unconsciously adopt when we speak of other people's possessions: "I call the whole place nothing but a glorified railway station". I suppose he was thinking of St. Pancras, but Lowther was built long before stations or railways were even thought of. I think Wordsworth was far nearer the mark when he spoke, in that sonnet I mentioned just now, of "cathedral pomp".

'Let me remind you of two of the owners of the Castle whose characters help to explain the renown of their home. The first is William Lord Lonsdale, who lived from 1757 to 1844. He succeeded the gentleman who was known as the bad Lord Lonsdale, who inspired such alarm that when he appeared in the streets of Penrith people stopped talking and tried to hide themselves. I should not myself call him bad—he was rather an eccentric. His eccentricity took the form of never paying any of his bills, which not unnaturally made him detested by those who did not get paid. But there is no better start in life than to follow someone who is unpopular. The good lord—that is William—was the builder of the castle in the early eighteen-hundreds, and he is the link between the Lake poets and the house. He paid the poet the money which his predecessor the bad lord had always refused to pay. It was a fairly large sum for those days—about £4,000. More than that he appreciated the poet's company and his writings. Wordsworth's great poem—"The Excursion"—is dedicated to him.

'The other owner who perhaps comes most readily to the mind of all of us is the great-grandson of the good lord—Hugh Lord Lonsdale who died during the last war. The memory of this great sporting lord, with the cigar, the large button-hole and the yellow motor-cars strikes a responsive chord in most of us'.



Lowther Castle, Westmorland: the south front



# The Insufficiency of Liberalism

By E. F. SCHUMACHER

IT is not often, nowadays, that philosophers write in defence of the philosophy of eighteenth-century liberalism. Mr. Charles Frankel has written such a book\* and its message is this: once and once only in the whole history of man a true philosophy has been found which led to an 'unprecedented vision' of happiness for all, limitless prosperity, and never-ending progress. The essence of this philosophy is that there is no need for any philosophy, nor for religion, nor for any systematic moral teaching—'good manners', says Mr. Frankel, 'will do the job perfectly well'; that the one thing needful is social engineering, not personal therapy; and that 'science' must be 'the central organising factor for modern society'. All religion and metaphysics, all concern with questions of meaning and purpose are not only futile but definitely unhealthy and reactionary; the only sane course is 'simply to ask no questions' of this kind.

Having expounded this philosophy, Mr. Frankel proceeds to take to task 'the prophets who tell us that this revolution of modernity has been a failure'. The disasters of recent history, he argues, are in no way the result of this revolution: on the contrary, they are due to our having deserted liberalism and its twin brother, rationalism, and this desertion is largely the result of the influence of writers like Maritain in France, Niebuhr in America, and Toynbee in England, who want to drag us back to a religious view of life; to (as he says) 'conceptions of reason and argument that antedate the rise of modern science'.

Let us try to define the position of this liberal rationalism on the map of the human mind. Maybe, I should not say 'map' but call it the 'ladder' of the human mind; or speak of possible stages of development. I propose to distinguish three such stages.

## Innocence and Faith

We may take as the first stage in the unfolding of the individual mind a condition of innocence and faith in which the conventions, ideologies, and established dogmas of the environment are accepted without much critical scrutiny. We may call this the stage of primitive religiosity. Every child, it would seem, passes through this stage; many people remain there all their lives. Primitive religiosity is an integrated condition which permits a high degree of personal contentment and happiness. But it is also a vulnerable condition, particularly in modern times. Because of the weakness of the critical faculty, it is liable to degenerate into superstition.

The first great awakening, the first move on to a higher level, is the discovery of the use and power of logical reasoning. Sometimes this awakening comes to a man with overwhelming dramatic force. Here is a most marvellous instrument for the modification and control of the environment. Here is a method for the attainment of objective knowledge. There is no obvious limitation to the power of reason. Nature can be explored, but so can society. Reason appears as a sovereign power, independent of any authority whatever. Reason stands immediately in opposition to tradition, revelation, and authority. If reason is taken as objective and sovereign, it must fight all restrictions and impediments. The rationalist is automatically and inevitably also a liberal.

This great awakening, this discovery of the marvellous power of human reason, of course, exacts its own price. Innocence is lost; piety is lost. The integration and happiness of the life of primitive religiosity is lost. But a new kind of happiness is gained—at least by those richly endowed with the powers of reason. For them the price seems well worth paying for what they gain; for them, the loss of innocence and piety appears simply as a wonderful liberation from superstition and the despotism of men and ideas. The twin forces of rationalism and liberalism give birth to science, and to applied science and technology in particular.

The individual who has fully woken up to the powers of reason, who has fully accomplished the transition from stage one—of primitive religiosity—to stage two—of rationalism—of course feels immeasurably superior to anyone still remaining at the first stage. He cannot help feeling superior because, after all, he himself used to be at stage one; he knows it all; he remembers it all; nobody can tell him anything

about it that he does not know perfectly well. There is no possibility of fruitful argument between people at different stages. The man at the level of primitive religiosity can see only the lack of innocence, the lack of piety, the lack of simple happiness in the man who has reached the level of rationalism. On the whole, the rationalist must strike him as evil and subversive. Since he has not woken up to the powers of reason, he cannot possibly understand anyone who has so woken up. Nor can the rationalist explain himself; although he can fully understand the man at stage one—having been there himself—he cannot make himself understood, just as a seeing man cannot explain colour to one born blind.

## Stuck at the Level of Rationalism

As some people never go beyond stage one, so there are people who never go beyond stage two. They get stuck at the level of rationalism. But there are others who do not get stuck. Having discovered reason, they wake up to discover something that is higher than reason. Having gone to the very limits of the territory opened up by the powers of reason, they discover a far more marvellous territory beyond, a high plateau from which they can survey the whole province of reason with ease; and equally the fertile valleys of primitive religiosity. They are now able to see that reason, in fact, is not a sovereign power, that it is an executive officer—competent, efficient, essential—but not the policy maker. As has been said long ago: 'Reason is like an officer when the King appears; the officer then loses his command and hides himself'.

It is obvious that this second awakening must land the people who have attained it in trouble. The tragic impossibility of mutual understanding between people at stages one and two repeats itself in a more complicated form. How does the man at stage two react to a man at stage three? He cannot conceive that there could be anything beyond reason, so he looks upon him as a backslider. At first he is incredulous; then he becomes offended and annoyed. 'You have fallen back', he says: 'you have betrayed the precious gift of Enlightenment to ensure the tranquility of your own soul'.

This is inevitable because the person at stage two—the liberal rationalist—cannot possibly comprehend the difference between a man at stage one and a man at stage three. He can only see what these two have in common, namely, something that refuses to recognise reason as the highest authority. That the one is at the infra-rational and the other at the supra-rational stage is totally invisible to him, simply because he cannot recognise even the possibility of any stage above that of reason. How could he possibly cope with a man at stage three? He will ask him to explain in straightforward logical terms—in the language of rationalism—what is that alleged higher knowledge of which that former rationalist claims to have had a glimpse. But he will be told: 'This cannot be explained in the language of rationalism', which only provokes the retort (given by Mr. Frankel) 'I refuse to believe that intellectual obscurity is a form of higher wisdom'.

## Need for a Second Awakening

Argument assumes an essential equality between the partners. But a rationalist is no more equal to a man who has grown beyond rationalism than a person of primitive religiosity is equal to a rationalist. Argument is a suitable instrument among people at the same stage; each can then learn from the other. But to learn from someone who has reached a higher stage is possible only on the basis of an acceptance of initial inequality. Acceptance is something akin to faith, and the acceptance of initial inequality is just another name for the acceptance of authority. The difficulties of this situation are immense. How did the liberal rationalist obtain his first awakening? Precisely by the rejection of authority and faith. And now he is told that there is a possibility, indeed a need, for a second awakening which, however, can be attained only by such an apparently retrogressive movement as the readmittance of authority and faith.

\* *The Case for Modern Man*. Macmillan. 18s.



There are two ways of studying a higher teaching. These two ways have been concisely described by Jacques Maritain, himself a Thomist:

Of the two ways of studying St. Thomas, one is sound, the other radically vicious. I am so strongly convinced of this that I should like at all costs to persuade undergraduate youth of the fact. There is a way of studying St. Thomas which consists of reading Kant, Bergson and (others) and finally the writings of St. Thomas in chronological order, so as to throw light upon St. Thomas—the light of modern philosophy—and to discern everything he received from his predecessors, everything he added to them, everything he . . . added in the course of his own evolutionary progress. This method . . . is useless and sterile. Because what it comes to after all is treating St. Thomas as an object to be judged—and behaving as though we were already in possession of knowledge, whereas it is a question of acquiring knowledge . . .

The other way is to put oneself really . . . in the position of a living recipient from a living donor, as one to be formed and enlightened facing one who forms and enlightens, so that St. Thomas may teach us to think and see, so that we may advance under his guidance . . . This is a good and fruitful way . . .

Yet this surely is a way which is open only to those who have, to some extent at least, overcome the intellectual pride of the rationalist, who have regained, on the moral level, something of the innocence and sense of wonder of little children.

### A Man's Total Way of Life

What is particularly irksome and unacceptable to the liberal rationalist is to be told that the attainment of the supra-rational stage is largely dependent on a man's total way of life. A man must be able to live in a pure, disciplined, and, shall we say, disinterested manner if he wants to see more than the rationalist can see, because all interests are like coloured spectacles. The rationalist understands that disinterestedness may be desirable for pure science, but that this requirement should be extended over the whole of a man's thoughts and actions appears to him simply as a recrudescence of tyrannous moralising. Are not here the very chains which liberal enlightenment had destroyed?

In short, man at stage two looks at man at stage three with total incomprehension. One moment he takes him for a man at stage one and tries to awaken him to the beauties of rationalism; but then he is forced to realise that the man at stage three is himself a perfectly competent rationalist, so, in his utter bewilderment, he calls him a hypocrite or something worse. Yet the man at stage three fully understands him all the time. Had he not himself gone to the very limit of rationalism? So he cries out: 'They have eyes, but they see not; they have ears, but they cannot hear'.

While the relationship between the rationalist—at stage two—and the supra-rationalist—at a higher stage—is a particularly unhappy one, that between the man of primitive religiosity—at stage one—and the supra-rationalist is somewhat easier. This is sometimes expressed in the words:

To the innocent man, trees are trees and mountains are mountains.

To the learned man, trees are no longer trees and mountains are no longer mountains.

To the wise man, trees are trees again and mountains are again mountains.

Thus stage one and stage three indeed have something in common. One might say, both are stages of integration, while the in-between stage is one without integration.

Let me now add, to avoid misunderstanding, two things: the first is that the possibility for reaching all stages appears to exist in all people, and the higher potentialities of man—the potentialities of rational and supra-rational perception—are normally developed in all men to some slight extent. Even a radical rationalist normally maintains at least some small part of his mind on the supra-rational level. So the possibility of understanding is never wholly absent. Secondly, I should like to add that by talking about three stages of man I am in no way denying the existence of further stages beyond the third.

Having said this, I must now return to Mr. Frankel's book. Here we have an almost classic case of a man who has attained the first awakening and has become a radical, liberal rationalist. His intellectual heroes are Voltaire, Condorcet, Russell, and Dewey, but the first two rather more so than the latter two. Unlike Voltaire and Condorcet, however, he tries to defend liberal rationalism not against men at stage one, against men who refuse to recognise and employ the marvellous powers of reason, but against men at stage three, against great thinkers like Maritain, Niebuhr, Toynbee and others, who have themselves passed through the stage of rationalism and found it wanting.

No wonder that this is an unequal battle. Mr. Frankel is bound to admit that Maritain, for instance, is a man of outstanding intellectual power. He is also bound to recognise that Maritain is fully acquainted with the arguments on which liberal philosophy is based. Yet, when dealing with Maritain's arguments, he dismisses them with phrases like 'as a moment's reflection will indicate' and calls them 'simple errors'. In other words, Mr. Frankel, as man at stage two, dimly appreciates the fact of Maritain's infinite superiority, yet he cannot help talking to him, or about him, as if Maritain were a man at stage one who had never given a moment's reflection to the problems he deals with and was guilty of 'simple errors'. In the end, Mr. Frankel, against all his better knowledge, tries to persuade his reader that 'Professor Maritain has exhorted men to have faith in faith. He has given them, in place of a cause, empty and indignant words'.

Do you believe that Maritain has gained world-wide recognition by speaking nothing but 'empty and indignant words'? If you do, then I can only say: read Mr. Frankel's own summary—imperfect as it is—of Maritain's critique of liberal philosophy.

The disease afflicting the modern world, says Maritain in his book on Thomas Aquinas, is in the first place a disease of the mind; it has now attacked the roots of the mind—the triple root—rational, religious, and moral—of our life.

To Mr. Frankel this is incomprehensible. As a rationalist, he cannot see the mind as a whole, he can only see the executive officer—Reason—who is becoming ever more efficient. He cannot see that efficiency itself is merely a servant, and that the servant's value depends on the purposes he is serving. So he rejects all inquiry into purposes: what we need, he says, is social engineering: it is clear that our problems 'are institutional, not psychological—political, not moral'. Yet Mr. Frankel himself acknowledges that we live in 'an age of drift and disaster'. We do not know 'where to begin and where to stop'. 'A sense of limits', he exclaims, 'this is what is most obviously and acutely missing now. Everything—the simplest joys of ordinary men, the highest refinements of our moral tradition—has a doubtful future: even the survival of the race seems to be an open question'.

### Symptoms of Disease

Exactly—and are these not symptoms of a terrible disease, a disease that has attacked the very roots of our life: religion, morality and, indeed, rationality too? What does liberal philosophy offer as an antidote to such a disease? The decisive answer to this question, I think, has been given by the most brilliant exponent of this philosophy, Bertrand Russell, in one devastating sentence: 'Only on the firm foundation of unyielding despair can the soul's habitation henceforth be safely built'. 'Unyielding despair'—that is the inevitable fate for any men whose development becomes arrested at stage two, the level of liberal rationalism. And since, as Mr. Frankel shows, the spirit of liberal rationalism is the distinctive feature of our western civilisation, it is not surprising that, as he looks round, he finds a general feeling of helplessness, of hopelessness, of despair, and of 'unsupportable tension'.

There is only one way out of the present situation, 'sodden with blood and tears': some men must advance beyond stage two, on to stage three, so that they can resume the all-important work, so crudely interrupted by the pride of liberal rationalism, of nourishing the very roots of our life—religious, moral, and rational; so that they can guide and help us, can teach us again 'where to begin and where to stop'.

Maritain, Niebuhr, and Toynbee, each in his own manner, have taken the decisive step, the step beyond mere liberal rationalism. They can therefore effectively contribute to the immense labours that are needed if our civilisation is to become whole again. No one whose mind is not entirely closed could fail to experience, when brought into contact with their thoughts, the vivifying effect, the life-restoring power of ideas coming from the supra-rational level. It is indeed strange that none of this has reached the mind of Charles Frankel, confined in the shell of self-sufficient rationalism, and, as Maritain would put it, shut up 'in the incommunicability of the individual'.—*Third Programme*

To celebrate the eightieth anniversary of the founding of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings by William Morris, the Society is arranging a course of lectures at the Victoria and Albert Museum under the title 'The English Country House'. The first lecture will be given at 6.15 p.m. on June 6 by Viscount Esher. The other lecturers will be Mr. John Summerson, Professor Geoffrey Webb, and Mr. H. S. Goodhart-Rendel. Tickets, price 2s. 6d., may be obtained from the Secretary of the Society, 55 Great Ormond Street, London, W.C.1.



# The Cow Was Not to Blame

By F. J. ODGERS

**R**ECENTLY, in a case in the Queen's Bench Division, one of Her Majesty's Judges said to Counsel: 'Is one to abandon every vestige of common sense in approaching this matter?' Counsel replied: 'Yes, my Lord', whereupon, we gather with some relief, the case was adjourned. This rather surprising exchange took place in a common law case in a common law court, and the common law has long prided itself on being, in the words of the late Lord Justice Farwell, 'the common sense of the community crystallised and formulated by our forefathers'. In what sort of case, then, were such comments provoked? The answer is: a case about a cow, which inevitably involved the general law of liability for animals; and if the law on this subject was crystallised common sense in the time of our forefathers, it has, in some of its aspects at any rate, ceased in our time to sound like any sort of sense at all.

Happily the case in question, after its rather startling opening, did in fact resolve itself into a common-sense issue not dependent on the refinements of lawyers' law about animals; but these might well have been highly relevant, as counsel was suggesting to the judge. The case was one in which the unfortunate plaintiff, a pedestrian, had been knocked down by a black-and-white cow on a zebra crossing in a market town. The cow, it seems, ran away from the market where it was being unloaded, and trotted first into a cul-de-sac where, in his Lordship's words, 'if people had only acted with half as much intelligence as the average cow in circumstances of this kind it could have been safely retrieved'. But, instead, people stood on a wall and shouted and waved their arms, and the cow not unnaturally returned to the High Street. It trotted on and, again in his Lordship's words, however unacquainted it may have been with the regulations relating to zebra crossings, it did seem to recognise a policeman when it saw one. Faced by the outstretched arm of the law, it turned into a car park and a cordon was hopefully formed, but this time someone blew a motor-horn and the startled cow broke through to the street and trotted on again. It collided with the plaintiff on a zebra crossing, knocked him down, trampled over him, broke his arm, and continued on its way until it was eventually shot on a piece of waste ground. One has considerable sympathy with the plaintiff, and not a little with the cow, but the question was whether either the owner of the cow or the cattle transporters who had carried it to market were legally liable.

## Classifying 'Domestic' Animals

For the purpose of determining liability for damage done by animals, the common law has divided them into two classes: animals *ferae naturae*—wild animals of a dangerous kind—and animals *mansuetae naturae*—tame or domestic animals of a normally harmless kind. Sir Mathew Hale in the seventeenth century, cases decided in the nineteenth century, and common sense throughout, have told us that monkeys, bears, and elephants are dangerous animals. In this century there have been cases on zebras and on lions and leopards. And at the end of last year elephants again occupied the courts for a considerable time, but the law is not entirely clear as to the tests for determining any particular animal's qualification for inclusion in the dangerous class. In the second class—the normally harmless animals—are horses, cows, sheep, pigs, dogs, cats, and so on. The bull has also been held to be in this class, and in 1940 the Court of Appeal heard argument and examined expert evidence on the nature and habits of camels. Finding that nowhere in the world are camels wild, and that 'in every country where they exist they are domestic animals used for carrying either people or loads on their backs, or for draught purposes', the court placed the camel in the domestic class with the horse and the cow. And this despite the expert evidence for the plaintiff—evidence which will commend itself to many who have suffered—that 'camels are dangerous, treacherous, and vindictive animals, which are not to be trusted'. So classification itself is not as simple as it may seem.

As to liability, assuming the animal has been properly classed as dangerous, the owner or keeper of it is strictly liable for any injury it causes. If you are bitten by my monkey, hugged by my bear, seized

by my elephant, or mauled by my tiger, you (or perhaps your widow) may recover damages without proving either knowledge on my part that the animal was likely to cause the injury, or failure by me to exercise care in its control. I shall not, it is true, be liable if you bring the injury on yourself. In the real zebra case in 1900, the plaintiff visited some pleasure gardens which included an exhibition of wild animals. Wandering around, he came to a stable in which were four zebras properly tied up in separate stalls. Finding the stable door open, he went inside and, being an animal lover, he went up to one of the zebras and stroked it. The zebra—a Thurber animal if ever there was one—did not appreciate his attentions and promptly kicked him through the partition into the next stall, where the next zebra equally promptly bit him. The plaintiff's action failed; he ought not to have been in the stable, he ought not to have interfered with the zebra, his injury was due to his own default. But if the plaintiff has not brought the injury on himself or voluntarily assumed the risk of injury, then the defendant is strictly liable, and not even the wrongful act of a third party causing the release of his animal will, it seems, afford him a defence as the law stands today.

## The *Scienter* Rule

On the other hand, if you are bitten by my dog or my horse, gored by my bull or cow, or butted by my ram, then as the law stands at present it is for you to prove that I knew that the animal had a vicious propensity—a rule known as the *scienter* rule. You must establish knowledge on my part that my animal had a tendency to the particular kind of mischief that was in fact done. If my dog or horse bites you, you must show that I knew that it had a tendency to bite human beings. A propensity to bite other dogs or horses would not be enough.

An owner may be liable for damage done by his domestic animals on grounds other than the *scienter* rule. There is an absolute liability, imposed by the Dogs Acts, 1906 to 1928, on the owner of a dog causing damage to cattle or poultry, and there is liability on the owner of cattle (widely defined, but not including dogs and cats) which trespass on to another's land. But the extent to which a cattle owner is liable under the old action of cattle trespass is open to some doubt. I am liable if my cow trespasses on your property and tramples down your crops or eats up your vegetables, for this is damage natural to the species of the animal, but where the trespassing cow causes personal injuries the answer is not necessarily the same. In a case in 1954 a lady, over eighty years of age, was knocked down and trampled on by a heifer, one of a number of young cattle, all quiet, well-behaved beasts that had previously given no trouble but had trespassed into her garden in the dark. It was generally accepted, though not by Lord Goddard, that if the old lady's injuries had been caused by an attack upon her, due to a vicious propensity in the heifer, she would have failed in her action as there was no evidence of *scienter*, and no negligence by the owner. But the court allowed her to recover damages because the injury was due to the clumsiness of the animal, which had not made an attack, had not been vicious, and had merely blundered into the lady while following its natural instincts and trying to rejoin its fellows in the dark. The damage could properly be called a natural result of the trespass.

The difficulty is, in the words of Lord Goddard, that 'in many cases it would be impossible to say with certainty whether the injuries were caused by vice, or playfulness, or mere accident'. And a situation in which counsel might find himself arguing for the defendant along the line: 'My cow did not injure you accidentally: she did it on purpose—so I am not liable', does indeed have a touch of Alice in Wonderland about it. It was this sort of situation, perhaps, that was in the minds of judge and counsel in our case of the cow on the zebra crossing. And, again, the cattle trespass action is available only to the occupier of the land against which the trespass is committed. So if your cow, trespassing in my garden, accidentally knocks me down, I can recover in cattle trespass; but if it knocks down my aged uncle who is visiting me, he can recover only if he can establish *scienter* or negligence in control of the animal by you.



Another difficult question under the law as it is today is the liability, or rather the absence of liability, of an owner of cattle which escapes, not into someone else's property but on to the highway. A series of decisions, affirmed by the House of Lords in 1947, have established that the common law imposes no duty on the owner or occupier of land adjoining the highway to prevent animals escaping from it on to the highway. A plaintiff in 1942 had no remedy when a horse which had wandered on to the highway from the defendant's premises, through a gate that had been left open, 'reared up and dropped down full weight' on the radiator of the plaintiff's stationary motor-car. A cyclist in the black-out in 1944 likewise had no remedy when he was knocked off his bicycle by a horse which had strayed through a gap in the defendant's fence. And in 1950 a motor-cyclist was without a remedy when a six-and-a-half-year-old unbroken shire mare, accustomed, as the court said, to jumping in a manner quite unbecoming to a shire mare, leaped over a hedge bordering the highway and landed on the plaintiff's petrol tank. The rule, as Lord Greene once said, appears to be ill adapted to modern conditions.

### The Ox in the Ironmonger's Shop

On the other hand, if an owner brings or drives an animal on to the highway he does owe a duty to take reasonable care in controlling it. He is liable if he is negligent. But, apart from the *scienter* rule, he is liable only if he is negligent: the cattle trespass action does not avail an occupier of premises adjoining the highway into which cattle stray when they are being driven along the highway. By occupying premises on the highway he takes the risk of accidental entry by cattle. This was established in 1882 in the well-known case of the ox that turned from the highway into an ironmonger's shop in Stamford, where it spent three-quarters of an hour, doing, surprisingly, only £1's worth of damage. There was no evidence of negligence on the part of the drover, so the plaintiff failed. He had suffered, it was said, 'a necessary evil which those whose lands border on the highway must sustain'.

To return to the cow on the zebra crossing: the judge found on the facts that it had never shown any vice and that its collision with the plaintiff was not a vicious attack. There was therefore no question of liability under the *scienter* rule. The accident occurred on the highway, so there was no question of trespass. There remained the issue of negligence and on this his Lordship came to the conclusion, on the evidence, that every proper precaution had been observed in unloading the animal, so that there was no negligence by either of the defendants. That disposed of the case, and *The Times* was able to give its report the delightful heading: 'Cow unacquainted with zebra crossing regulations—Posthumously exonerated'. The blame, in his Lordship's opinion, lay not on the plaintiff, or the cow, or the cow's owner or carrier, but on the

general public which had by its misguided efforts driven frantic an animal accustomed to the tranquillity of the farm.

This case, then, would not be affected by reform of the law relating to animals, but the need for reform, on some of the points we have been considering, is well recognised. A strong committee was appointed in 1951, headed by Lord Goddard and including Mr. Justice Devlin, who has recently been much concerned with the law of animals and the need for its reform, in the case of the circus elephants that knocked down and injured the midgets. The committee reported at the end of 1952 and its report was presented to parliament in January 1953. The committee, with one powerful dissident, was in favour of abolishing the distinction between animals *ferae naturae* and those *mansuetae naturae*, and of making liability depend on whether the owner or keeper of the animal has exercised reasonable care to prevent the animal causing damage. The standard of care required would be greater or less according to the nature and habits of the animal concerned, but the really important change would be, in relation to domestic animals, the shifting of the onus of proof so that it would be for the defendant to show that he acted without negligence, and not for the plaintiff to adduce affirmative proof that negligence existed. The committee also recommended, this time unanimously, that the rule that there is no liability for the escape of animals on to the highway should be abolished and that accordingly an occupier should be under a duty to take reasonable care that cattle and poultry lawfully on land in his occupation should not escape therefrom on to the highway. They also recommended, again with one dissident, that the cattle trespass rule of absolute liability, in so far as it related to damage done by trespassing cattle to land and crops, should be retained. The committee would also retain the absolute liability imposed by the Dogs Acts in respect of damage by dogs to cattle and poultry, and they would increase the existing power to shoot trespassing dogs in defence of cattle and poultry.

### A Constructive Report

As we have seen, the report of the committee reached parliament over four years ago. It may be that second thoughts will be necessary on some of its recommendations, but it is there as a constructive report by an impressive committee. The task of the law reformer is, however, a difficult one, and pressure on the time of the House is great. There are, perhaps, other branches of the law more urgently in need of reform, but every case of animals, including the cow that failed to give way on the crossing, reminds us that the law on this subject has some claim to the attention of the legislature. It will be unfortunate if we continue some of the common law rules to a point at which, whether the animal in dispute is a cow, a camel, or a zebra, the sensible layman can say, with Mr. Bumble, that 'the law is a ass'.—*Third Programme*

# Contemporary Architecture and the Church

By the Rev. PETER HAMMOND

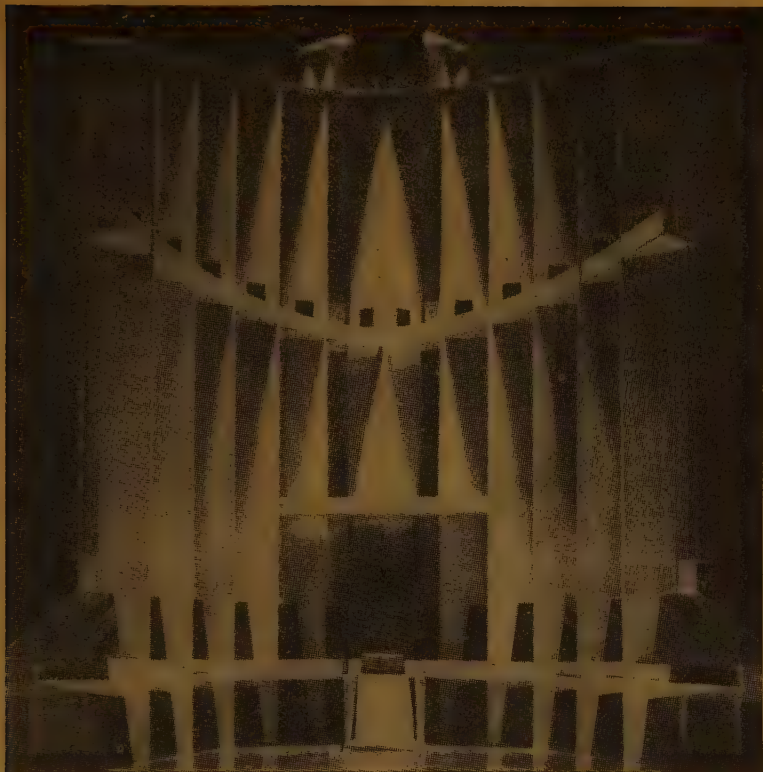
THERE are many signs today that church architecture is no longer concerned solely with lifeless essays in sham-Gothic, that religious art is not necessarily synonymous with the familiar products of the ecclesiastical furnishers. Jean Cocteau has assumed the unfamiliar role of a painter of church murals; George Pace's recent work at Llandaff, dominated by Epstein's cast aluminium Christ in Majesty, is startlingly unlike the average Englishman's conception of church restoration; while last year's preview of the Coventry windows gave Londoners an exciting glimpse of a Christian art wholly free, as Basil Taylor remarked at the time, from 'that smell of old damp stone, or Victorian hassocks, which seem to many a prerequisite of church furnishing, even of Christianity itself'. John Piper's windows at Oundle, Graham Sutherland's Crucifixion, and Henry Moore's carving at St. Matthew's, Northampton, have all aroused widespread interest, even in circles where the Church is commonly regarded as little more than a curious and largely irrelevant anachronism.

The most important factor in this growth of interest in contemporary church architecture and furnishing has undoubtedly been the French Dominicans' courageous, if controversial, policy of pressing into the service of the Church all that is most vital in contemporary art. Assy

and Audincourt, Matisse's chapel at Vence, and Le Corbusier's at Ronchamp, have all received widespread publicity on both sides of the Atlantic. Léger and Braque, Bazaine and Rouault, have all contributed to a remarkable post-war renaissance of French sacred art.

But this spectacular challenge to the art of St. Sulpice has tended to overshadow the less-publicised, but no less important, aspects of a movement which has been gaining ground steadily for more than thirty years. The foundations of the present renewal of sacred art were laid in France, Germany, and Switzerland during the period between the wars. One of the truly significant buildings of the twentieth century is Auguste Perret's church of Notre Dame du Raincy, in Paris, completed in 1923. It is difficult to overestimate the importance of this essay in glass and reinforced concrete for the subsequent development of church architecture in Europe and America. Together with a group of German and Swiss churches built in the late 'twenties and early 'thirties, it provides the starting point for modern ecclesiastical architecture. These early churches of the continental liturgical movement have for years provided a standard and a stimulus by their subordination to the demands of the liturgy, their freedom from antiquarianism, and their courageous use of new materials and techniques. All





Model of the interior of the church of Notre Dame de Royan: the west end with entrance steps. The architect, Gillet, 'employs a type of construction evolved . . . for the locomotive sheds of the French National Railways'

subsequent church architecture of any significance has been wrestling with the problems which were first clearly propounded in interiors like those of Rudolf Schwarz's church of the Blessed Sacrament at Aachen, and Dominikus Böhm's church of St. Englebert in Cologne.

It is against the background of a widespread renewal of church architecture, which has already left its mark from Italy and Finland to the Pacific seaboard of Canada and the United States, that I want to consider two recent surveys of post-war churches. The first, published in Paris last September, deals with the reconstruction and restoration of French churches destroyed or damaged during the war. The second, also recently published, consists of photographs, drawings, and plans of sixty post-war churches in this country. The contrast between the two surveys is startling, and may well give rise to some disquieting reflections on this side of the Channel.

The causes of the present renaissance of sacred art are ultimately theological. The renewal of church architecture on the Continent is one of the many outward signs of that renewal of the whole life of the Church which we know as the liturgical movement, and it is only in this wider context that it can be understood. The significance of Notre Dame du Raincy does not lie simply in its use of new materials—there had been earlier churches of reinforced concrete—but in the fact that Perret first employs modern technical resources to create a church which expresses a new understanding of the liturgy. The medieval and baroque conception of the central act of the Church's life has given place to a new vision of the Eucharist, more akin to that of the early

Church, the characteristic expression of which is the Christian community gathered round the table of sacrifice.

The typical medieval interior, with its elongated nave and chancel, and its altar set against the east wall of the church, reflects a clericalised conception of the Eucharist in which the laity have ceased to play any active part. But in French churches built since the war one can see a new understanding of the Mass as a corporate action in which all are, so to say, con-celebrants. There are many attempts to devise a plan, a new relationship between nave and sanctuary, which will express this conception in architectural forms. The freedom which modern methods of construction have conferred upon the architect has been a vital factor in the development of new plans based upon the square, the circle, the ellipse, and the trapezoid. But the most successful interiors of recent years have been those in which mere technical virtuosity has been subordinated to a strict liturgical functionalism. At St. Felix and St. Regula, in Zurich, the sanctuary is a shallow rectangle set on the short axis of an ellipse. In another recent church by Fritz Metzger, a trapezoidal nave is combined with a sanctuary in the form of an ellipse. These plans would have been unthinkable so long as the architect was constrained by the need to cover a space in stone or timber. But each of these churches is completely convincing because the revolutionary plan is rigorously functional: it is inspired by a real understanding of the liturgical action which gives the building its *raison d'être*.

There are many churches in the French survey where the challenge of a particular programme has created new and stimulating architectural solutions. There are others which are less successful precisely because this new-found freedom has become a temptation; churches which suggest that the architect brought to his work a prior determination to build, for example, a round church, or a triangular church, or that he has tried to impose upon his church a form invented for a different and alien function. Take the case of Gillet's church of Notre Dame de Royan, for example, where the architect employs a type of construction evolved by the engineer Bernard Lafaille for the locomotive sheds of the French National Railways. So far as one can judge from a model, the church seems likely to be aesthetically very exciting. Unfortunately, the success or failure of a church, as of any other building, has to be judged by other than purely aesthetic criteria.

On the Continent a deepened understanding of the liturgy has given the Church a new sense of its mission in the contemporary world. The growing recognition that France, no less than New Guinea, is today a *pays de mission* has brought about an astonishing re-orientation within the French Church during the last few years. The new French architecture is a missionary architecture which seeks to clothe the eternal truths of the Gospel in forms which are wholly and avowedly of our time. Its faults are those of a youthful and vigorous art which, at its best—at Ronchamp, for example—has succeeded in expressing, not in outworn *clichés* or in borrowed rhetoric but in a language which is plainly contemporary, something of the inexpressible mystery which is committed to the Church and by which she lives.

The strength of the best French architecture, as compared with our own, lies in this power to speak in the language of the living—to create architectural forms which express the theological vision of the twentieth century, as the characteristic forms of Gothic architecture expressed that of the twelfth. It is here that the English survey is so profoundly disturbing. To turn from the Continent to this country, from the French post-war churches to our own, is to enter another world: a world in which we are tempted to exclaim with André Malraux that the only worthy setting which remains for



The high altar in the new church of Le Pouzin, Valence (architect, Maurice Biny)



the central act of the Church's life is the mountain top, or within the barbed wire of the camps. The book abounds in forlorn symbols of our incapacity to build a church combining plastic quality with spiritual values. It is full of essays in dead languages; sterile exercises in neo-Georgian or a 'modernised Gothic, devoid of traditional elaboration'. The majority of these churches seem likely to foster the belief that the Church of England is hopelessly out of touch with the realities of the contemporary world: that the Gospel is not so much incredible as irrelevant.

On the evidence of this survey there is little immediate prospect of the emergence in this country of a church architecture such as we see today on the Continent and in America—an architecture springing from a renewed understanding of the liturgy and speaking in a living language. It is perhaps significant that the one post-war church by an English architect which will bear comparison with the best of the French churches is to be found not in this country but in Africa.

George Pace's university chapel at Ibadan, in Nigeria, is a church manifestly of its time, admirably simple, perfectly adapted to the demands of the liturgy. It possesses precisely those qualities in which most of our post-war churches are so lamentably deficient. Everywhere we find the same uncritical acceptance of late-medieval tradition, the same nostalgic regard for the Middle Ages as the Christian era *par excellence*, as is associated on the Continent with the name of Dom Guéranger.

This Gothic fixation reveals itself in the furnishing of our churches, with their rood-beams, their 'English' altars, their Gothic chairs and lecterns—all the stock-in-trade of the ecclesiastical furnisher. It contrasts disagreeably with the simplicity of the new French churches, in which all the instruments of the liturgy—the altar, the sacred vessels, vestments, candlesticks, mural paintings and stained-glass—are conceived in relation to the church as a whole, as an integral part of the architectural conception. It is also apparent in the persistence of a plan which, however 'traditional' it has become since the Gothic revival, reflects a view of the laity and their role in the liturgy which will scarcely stand up to examination in the light of the New Testament and the early Fathers of the Church, and is equally at variance with the new understanding of the Mass which has found expression in so many fine contemporary churches both in Europe and America. Only in some of the projects for 'church centres', where the church forms part of a complex of community buildings, can we see signs of a fresh approach: notably in three outstanding designs for churches at Doncaster, Cricklewood, and Crawley New Town, by Henry Braddock and D. F. Martin Smith.

The style of church architecture and furnishing of which Dr. Percy Dearmer was so passionate an advocate was in many ways a great improvement on what had gone before. Unfortunately, its presuppositions were antiquarian and aesthetic rather than theological, and it has bedevilled the natural development of sacred art in this country for a generation and more. Much of our recent church architecture, seemly and dignified though it is, reveals the same fatal antiquarian bias, the same timid subservience to forms which were once as contemporary as those of Ronchamp, but which belong irrevocably to a vanished culture. It has no message for the contemporary world, unless it be that Christianity itself has perished with the passing of that earlier culture. There would seem to be a certain irony in preaching the relevance of the Christian faith to the problems of our society in a church like St. Michael and All Angels, Tettenhall (an unbelievable building, completed in 1955 at a cost of £100,000).

In an age when few people hear sermons the Gospel can still be preached or obscured by our church buildings and the things we put into them. It must be confessed that, in this country at least, there is singularly little evidence of any awareness of the high potentialities of sacred art. The French hierarchy, on the other hand, seems to be very much alive to the importance of the present renewal of church architecture, and there is a measure of co-operation between the Church, the Ministry of Education, and institutions such as the Museum of Modern Art, which has no parallel on this side of the Channel. The Church of England, so far from setting a standard of integrity and simplicity for the contemporary arts, frequently falls short even of those standards which can be taken for granted in secular architecture. How many of the furnishings of our post-war churches, for example, would be worthy of a place in the Design Centre? Though there are a few notable exceptions, far too much that goes into our churches—to say nothing of the buildings themselves—is a scandal to the unbeliever,

and corrupts not merely the taste but also the faith of the practising Christian. It would be a splendid gesture if one of our bishops would refuse to consecrate for the Church's service anything from an altar to a candlestick which failed to survive the scrutiny of, say, Sir Gordon Russell and Professor Robin Darwin.

There are indeed some grounds for thinking that the prospect for the next ten years is not so gloomy as might be inferred on the evidence of this survey alone. The new cathedral at Coventry—though somewhat conventional in its functional analysis—is refreshingly adventurous in matters of detail. Mr. Pace has been commissioned to build churches in England, as well as in Wales and Africa; Robert Maguire's church at



The chapel of Ibadan University, Nigeria (architect, George Pace)

Bow Common promises to be unusually interesting; and the stained-glass department of the Royal College of Art seems likely to set new standards in at least one field of church art. There are signs, too, that more and more architects (as well as certain firms of church furnishers) are beginning to realise the importance of employing individual craftsmen of real ability.

Perhaps our most urgent need in this country is for some kind of centre, where architects, craftsmen, clergy, ordination candidates, and all who are concerned with the building of new churches (as distinct from the preservation of old ones), could find opportunities for studying the principles and the disciplines of sacred art; and for studying them in the context of the Church's function in contemporary society, and not in an aesthetic vacuum. There are several such centres in France today, and the work which they have done, through conferences, periodicals, and so on, has been of incalculable importance in creating a new and informed body of opinion within the French Church.

The possibility of a renewal of sacred art ultimately depends upon a prior renewal of the whole life of the Church. Sacred art, as Malraux has observed, can exist only in a community, a social group swayed by the same belief. It is only within the context of a liturgical movement comparable to that which now exists on the Continent, and within which the new church architecture was born, that we can hope to achieve that fusion of Christian truth and contemporary forms which is so manifest in France today, and for which one looks in vain in our own post-war churches.—*Third Programme*

To mark the centenary of the founding of the National Portrait Gallery in London a selection from its 4,000 portraits has been made, and these—about a tenth of the whole collection—are reproduced with biographical notes in *British Historical Portraits* (Cambridge, 18s.)



# John Donne and his Circle

A. ALVAREZ gives the first of four talks on 'The Poet and his Public'

**M**ISS MARY McCARTHY once remarked that for the undergraduate the three most exciting modern authors were Kafka, John Donne, and Aristotle. Certainly, since Donne was rediscovered forty-odd years ago, there has been a temptation to read him as though he were another T. S. Eliot; a poet, that is, working with sophisticated and modern aesthetic theories about the power of the imagination. For example, Professor Cleanth Brooks, who has as good an eye for a fashionable idea as anyone, once summed up his definition of the metaphysical poet with these words: 'Trusting in imaginative unity, he refuses to depend on non-imaginative classifications, those of logic and science'. It is an odd statement: it might be remotely true of Eliot—though he would hardly encourage it: it is wholly true of Hart Crane—and that was Crane's misfortune; but it has nothing whatsoever to do with Donne. For what is most striking about all the metaphysicals is not their far-fetched conceits: it is the immense logical pressure under which their work was done.

What has happened to Donne is what happens to most major poets: we read him as though he were one of us. Which means that we have managed to read our own kind of obscurity into his. We imagine that his original audience was more or less like ourselves. Of course, they were not. For some of them, as for most of us, he was a difficult poet. Even his friend, Ben Jonson, remarked 'that Done . . . , for not being understood, would perish'. But he did not mean that Donne was too imaginative and his audience too imperceptive; hence that Donne was bound, like Blake and all genius, to be misunderstood. In fact, it is rather hard to see exactly what Jonson did mean. For every Renaissance poet worth his salt was supposed to be difficult. It is an idea at least as old as the fourteenth century; Boccaccio makes a great play with it, and he in turn refers back to Petrarch and St. Augustine.

But Renaissance poetry was not, like Donne's, difficult in itself. It was difficult because its true business was with philosophy. Poetry, they thought, was a kind of sauce to make philosophy palatable to those with no particular taste for abstractions. On one occasion, for example, a gentleman with the improbable name of Sir Lodowick Bryskett asked Spenser to explain to him what moral philosophy was about. Spenser refused on the grounds that he had already written a poem to do precisely that. He was referring to 'The Faerie Queene'. 'The Faerie Queene' is, by all means, obscure; no one has yet interpreted the thing satisfactorily. But it is not obscure because Spenser is thinking in any profound or original way. (Indeed, it is so muddled that I would say that much of the time he is hardly thinking at all.) Such thinking as there is had all been done beforehand by Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, or—more probably—by the encyclopedist, Ficino. Spenser's job was to put over their ideas with as much invention and accomplishment as he could—to weave, as they put it, profit to pleasure. In this way he justified himself by pleasing everyone. As his contemporary, Sir John Harrington, put it:

The weaker capacities will feede themselves with the pleasantnes of the historie and the sweetnes of the verse, some that have stronger stomackes will as it were take a further taste of the Morall sence, a third sort, more high conceited then they, will digest the Allegorie.

The business of the professional poet, in short, was to cater in an improving way for as large a public as he could; and in doing so he was as subordinate to the moral truths of the philosophers as he was dependent upon his patron.

The thing to remember about Donne is that he was not a professional poet. He was trained as a lawyer, he became an M.P., the personal secretary of a great Minister of State, a writer of political theology,

and finally the most eminent divine of his day. He was, in fact, a wit; and that meant, distinctly, a man of intellect. You can see that most clearly in his attitude to philosophy; instead of serving it with reverence he used it. For example, the end of 'The good-morrow':

What ever dyes, was not mixt equally;  
If our two loves be one, or, thou and I  
Love so alike, that none doe slacken, none can die.

If you look up the notes to this you will find a reference to Aquinas; and behind him, I suppose, looms Aristotle. But Donne is merely using these two thinkers to lend weight to his own arguments. His interest is in his personal situation and not at all in the philosophers. They merely add a certain serious grandeur to

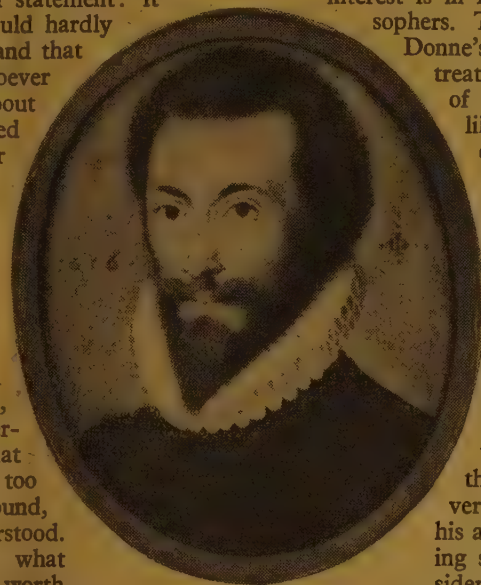
Donne's feelings. Compare that with the way Spenser treats the theories of Aristotle in, say, 'The Garden of Adonis'. Ideas for Spenser were separate entities like idols he could walk round, peer at, and make obeisance to. For Donne they were pillars, more or less useful in supporting his own building.

The reader was supposed to recognise them without any help from him. This is why he announced early in his career: 'I will have no such Readers as I can teach'.

He was, in short, a wit writing for wits. I have just quoted the preface to 'The Progresse of the Soule'. Donne himself called that poem 'this sullen Writ, Which just so much courts thee, as thou dost it'. This sums up his attitude to poetry. In his letters he was constantly saying that he was something better than a mere writer of verse. Hence, in his poems he made no effort to cajole his audience either by writing on palatable and improving subjects or by paying attention to what were considered to be the 'poetic' feelings. Above all, though, he made no attempt to please his audience by any display of technique, particularly by no 'smoothness of numbers'. He deliberately wrote his early satires harshly, partly because that was how satires were supposed to be written and partly to disclaim any particular interest in the craft of poetry. He did this at a period when the professionals were quarrelling fiercely about the nature of English metre. Donne's metrical harshness, then, like his obscurity, was a way of hanging out his sign. It read: 'Wits and Amateurs Only'.

There were, in fact, a number of writers trying to free their styles from the smooth falsities of rhetoric. But the rest were working in prose, most of them in Latin. They had only this in common: that by abandoning rhetoric, the art of public speaking, they abandoned, in principle, the art of public pleasing. They wrote, in short, for their intimate friends. Donne, like Montaigne, was one of these anti-rhetorical coterie writers. And it does not matter that his work was well known in his own day. With a couple of exceptions, he published none of it. His poems did circulate in manuscript: and those who were lucky enough to get hold of them made copies for their friends, and the friends made copies for their friends. Nevertheless, the original circle of Donne's readers was very select.

Who exactly was in this circle? In his middle age Donne sent to a friend a copy of a controversial prose work of his, called *Biathanatus*. In the letter that went with it he remarked that 'no hand hath passed upon it to copy it, nor many eyes to read it: onely to some particular friends in both Universities, then when I writ it, did I communicate it'. This, I think, was what happened originally to the poems. The questions are: who exactly were Donne's particular friends; and what was it in them that made them so eager to read poetry that was not only very difficult but deliberately disregarded the theorists of Elizabethan literature? Were they modern aesthetes born three and a quarter centuries before their time? Or, an even worse thought, were they angry young men in revolt against the poetic establishment?



John Donne: a miniature by Isaac Oliver, dated 1616

By gracious permission of H.M. The Queen



They were nothing of the kind. They may not have been the poetic establishment—which was made up of aristocrats who patronised professional poets—but in time they became part of the establishment, in the wider sense: that is, the influential ruling class.

When I speak of Donne's circle I mean his earliest group of friends; for according to Izaak Walton, his biographer, and Ben Jonson, his friend, Donne wrote the majority of his verse when he was in his early twenties. So his most important and formative audience was the circle of friends he had before he married in 1601. It is impossible to say with complete accuracy who any man's friends are. But I can give at least an idea of who made up the nucleus of Donne's earliest group. They are the men to whom he wrote letters or poems, who wrote or dedicated works to him, or who are associated with him by Walton or in contemporary memoirs and literary fragments, and so on.

### The Poet's Friends

In order, then, to show you what kind of person Donne was writing for, here is a list of twelve men who were his friends when he was writing his early poems. There was Sir Henry Wotton, later Ambassador to Venice and Provost of Eton; John Hoskyns, M.P., Judge, Serjeant-at-Law and author of one of the few good pieces of Elizabethan criticism, *Directions for Speech and Style*; Sir Richard Baker, M.P., and High Sheriff of Oxfordshire; Christopher Brook, who became a leading lawyer; his brother Samuel, who performed Donne's secret marriage ceremony and became the Royal Chaplain and a Professor of Divinity; Rowland Woodward, a minor diplomat and courtier; his kinsman, Thomas Woodward, who became another distinguished lawyer; Beaupré Bell, who was the son of the Chief Baron of the Exchequer; Everard Gilpin, the satirist; Sir John Roe, a distinguished soldier; Sir William Cornwallis, a politician and the first English imitator of Montaigne; finally, there was Donne's closest friend, Sir Henry Goodere, soldier, courtier, and patron of the arts.

It was a talented and various group. Its members had at least four things in common: first, they all went through the same educational mill as Donne—at either Oxford or Cambridge, and then at the Inns of Court. Second, they all joined the most respected professions—diplomacy, law, politics, the Church, the army; or they took up positions at court. Third, none of them were born into the really powerful aristocracy; most of them, like Donne himself, came from the wealthy middle classes; if they were knighted, as many of them were, they were knighted for their services, not for their birth. Lastly, almost every one of them wrote poetry of a kind, but only one of them actually published at all seriously; that was Gilpin, the satirist, and he plagiarised Donne in order to do so. In short, Donne's first and most formative audience was made up of the young, literary, middle-class intellectual *élite*, who, like Donne himself, were to become the leading professional men of their time. (Later in his life Donne continued to associate with the same kind of people.) It is these who were 'the wits', not the professional poets. The only professional poet who could claim him as a friend was Ben Jonson. For the rest, Donne had nothing to do with the literary world. When he was attacked—as he was at times—he did not reply; when he was invited to appear in anthologies, with one exception he refused.

I said that all Donne's circle tried their hand at poetry. The crux of the matter is then: what kind of work did they turn out? For none of them are known as metaphysical poets. The School of Donne, such as it was, came later. So if the members of his original circle were all writing nice, traditional Elizabethan verse, then it would be difficult to understand Donne's originality. But, a couple of them excepted, they were not. Their verse is difficult to get hold of because most of it exists only in manuscript. The reason for this is the only good one: it is not worth publishing. When poems by Donne's circle have been published, they have mostly been ascribed by early editors to Donne himself. Except that they have few conceits, they look like his worst apprentice-work: dialectical, harsh, colloquial—which in this case means wholly unmetrical—and very obscure, full of references to recondite sources. Perhaps it is hard to imagine what kind of pleasure they got out of this poetic manner. The answer was given by Donne's friend Sir Richard Baker: 'The very obscurity', he said, 'is pleasing to whosoever by labouring about it, findes out the true meaning; for then he counts it an issue of his own braine . . .'. The pleasure, in short, was a coterie pleasure of recognising each other's wit: the poets relied on the fact that they and their audience had had the same kind of training, done much the same reading, and shared the same taste for the sceptical, paradoxical and, above all, the dialectical.

This was very different from the moral, craftsmanly, theoretical emphasis of the Spenser-Sidney-Fulke Greville circle. It was the theories of this latter group which were handed down to the poets of the Restoration: the result was that the work of the metaphysicals, which was entirely without theories, appeared almost as an aberration. This is why Ben Jonson said: 'That Done . . . for not being understood, would perish'. He knew that Donne deliberately ignored the conventions and the theories in order to write with the kind of witty intimacy which would please both himself and his friends. I suppose Jonson knew, too, that their kind of highly trained, learned, argumentative intelligence was too rare to provide a lasting audience for Donne.

I would like to suggest that in this comment Jonson was almost as blinkered as the modern critics who have seen Donne purely in terms of his conceits. Donne was more than a superb Elizabethan intellectual—with all the limitations that term implies. He was what his best critic, Thomas Carew, called him:

. . . a King, that rul'd as hee thought fit  
The universall Monarchy of wit.

Let me stress that word 'universal'. Because Donne did not have to bother himself with the cramping poetic theories of his time, or with teaching those 'weaker capacities', he was able to bring all the pressure of his extraordinary intelligence on to the making of informal and personal verse. He could do so in the certainty that his audience was willing and able to follow without any prompting from him the complexities of his thought and the subtlety of his references and conceits.

The result of this intimacy between the poet and his audience was that Donne never had to fuss about his wit, or draw attention to it. So he could use it in a more central and vital way. Spenser and Donne both writing formal poems for marriages. When Spenser writes: 'Sweet Thames, run softly, till I end my song' he is talking not about the marriage, nor about its setting, but about his art: it is his song which is to *run sweet and soft*. But when Donne writes: 'To night put on perfection and a womans name' he is talking about the whole experience of living. I am told he is using a truism from Aristotle to do so. So be it. But he is so little self-conscious about the reference and is using it so thoroughly for his own ends that it appears in the poem not as some grand and immutable generalisation but as a truth he has arrived at, as the bride is about to, through his own feelings.

The difference between Spenser and Donne is, then, precisely that between the professional and the amateur. Spenser was interested, above all, in perfecting his art so that he could convey to as many people as possible and as pleasingly as possible the great moral truths of the philosophers. Donne, on the other hand, knew that his circle was not interested in being instructed in philosophy. They knew it all already. So he was only interested in poetic form inasmuch as it could be bullied into giving direct and natural expression to what he had to say for himself; and in that the philosophers were merely accessories to his wit.

Dr. Johnson once praised the metaphysicals by saying that 'to write on their plan it was at least necessary to have read and thought'. I would like to suggest a re-wording of that: To write on Donne's plan it was at least necessary to have lived and thought; to write on Spenser's, to have read and written.—*Third Programme*

## In Memoriam: Roy Campbell

He grew where waves ride nine feet high  
Like Zulu impis up the beach,  
Crested with sound, and every boy  
Must watch for the whites-of-eyes of each.

Long rollers, horned like bulls, would gore  
Into the whinnying groins of sand,  
And every boy, a matador,  
Must hold his courage out, and stand.

He learned to watch the rush and lunge,  
And feel his feet, and wait until  
The instant came for him to plunge  
Into the envy poised to kill;

To plunge, and come through to a world  
Of triumph on the other side,  
Where he is lifted up and whirled  
Down the long combers of his pride.

R. N. CURREY



# Speak and Span

W. R. RODGERS on the old days of an oral culture

**W**HEN I was a boy in Ireland my mother used to say to me: 'You're a slow-coach. You'd be a good one to send for sorrow'. But my father saw no harm in that. 'My father', said he, 'told me, and his father before him told him, that if ever you have to go anywhere, and have to run, never go. It's unlucky'.

My father belonged to a more deliberate world than I did, a world ruled by custom and ceremony. For he was a countryman by birth, and I was a city lad. My earliest memory is of hearing him read. Every evening as darkness fell over the Ulster city we would gather round the fire in the morning room and he would read aloud the day's doings from the newspaper. He always read aloud. Somehow I knew that he could not take in the printed word unless he first sounded it out, and I used to wonder at this. Why was he so old-fashioned? Why could he not read *into* himself, like me? It was not until later on in life that I learned that he belonged to a much older Europe with an oral culture, a Europe whose only word was the spoken word. The silent reader is a comparative late-comer to Europe.

## Unlettered, but Grand Talkers

So my father's world was very different from mine, which was a brave new world of books and newspapers and silent readers galore. Indeed he told me that when he first came to the city only about one in ten of the old residents there could read or write. Yet, said he, they were knowledgeable people and grand talkers. 'But nowadays', said my father, looking gloomily at the book I was immersed in, 'everybody loses his tongue as soon as he puts his nose in a book'. He himself never altered his habit of reading aloud. It was no use pointing out that if everybody in our busy city were to do the same thing there would be pandemonium.

So there I sat each winter's night with my chin on my knees, looking into the fire, while he wrestled with the great rocks of English words. I could not always make sense of what he was reading, for many of the words were too big and too strange for a child. But one good thing I did get from it all—I got a liking for the sound of words that never left me. 'Look after the sense', said the Duchess in *Alice in Wonderland*, 'and the sound will look after itself'. But being my father's son, I would rather have Coleridge's saying that a sentence which *sounds* pleasing has always a meaning which is deep and good. In fact, I prefer *sound* sense to *sound sense*: which is partly why poetry appeals to me, because in writing it I find that the sound leads me to the sense.

'Whenever you are writing a poem', said W. B. Yeats to a friend of mine, 'write as if you were shouting to a man on the other side of the street and he had to hear you'. Yeats himself always buzzed aloud like a bee when he was composing a poem—in a bus or a drawing-room or wherever he happened to be. The best story about him was told to me by his Dublin doctor, Oliver St. John Gogarty. Yeats, as an old man, had come back from Spain where he was wintering for the good of his health. He brought with him a letter from his Spanish doctor, addressed to his Dublin doctor. Gogarty opened the letter and read it. It said: 'We have here an antique cardio-sclerotic of advanced age . . . 'Well', says Gogarty, 'I knew it was a death sentence—heart disease—so I shoved the letter quickly into my pocket'. 'No, no', said Yeats, 'you must read me that letter, Gogarty. After all, it's my funeral'.

So, very reluctantly, Gogarty got out the letter and read the fatal words: 'We have here an antique cardio-sclerotic of advanced age . . . 'The old poet rolled the words over and over on his tongue—'Cardio-sclerotic . . . Cardio-sclerotic. . . Do you know, Gogarty?', said he, 'I would rather be called "cardio-sclerotic" than "Lord of Lower Egypt!"' There you have the poet's ear for words, the pure delight in the sound of words which enabled him to pick the eye out of death itself.

The word 'death' takes me back at once to the long evenings I spent, as a boy, in the morning-room. There was a sort of ritual about them. Each night, when my father paused in his reading of the newspaper, my mother would say quietly, 'Have you done with the deaths?' and

my father would hand her the middle page with the obituary notices in it. Death, I may say, was a lively feature of our community, and it was a sad day on which no notable or neighbourly demise occurred. Why? Because it was a public event, an occasion for everyone to sit up and take notice and recall the days that were gone. It is only in urbanised countries that a man's death has come to be looked on as a private affair, and the sole concern of his family. In Ireland—as in Spain—the bell still tolls for all, and friends and neighbours, near and far, are in duty bound to forgather and to take part in the common funeral ceremonies.

'In my young days', said an old countryman to me, 'when a death happened in the town-land there wouldn't be a hand's turn of work done that day by any man'. It was as if a breach had been made in the dykes of life, and only a combined operation would stop the flood. I can well remember how puzzled and vexed my mother looked when, in reading the paper, she came across an obituary notice which said 'Funeral private'. To her, and indeed to all the older generation, it was outrageous, like the private enclosure of some ancient and common piece of ground.

So it was not a morbid interest which my mother took in reading the obituary notices. It was, in fact, a social duty, which, I must say, she discharged cheerfully. For death lent a lovely edge and urgency to life. I learned more about life from listening to the grown-up gossip on these funeral occasions than I did at any other time. There was great rambling depth to the talk. It might range from funerals to fairies, and there was no telling where it would end up; but politics, religion, and wars were bound to come into it, especially wars. Then my grandmother would tell all about her uncle who fought at Trafalgar, and my father would recall his lost brothers who fought in the American Civil War, or his grandfather who remembered the 1798 Rebellion in Ireland. And as we listened to this far and widening backwash of memory there would be the sharp crack of a rifle in the darkness outside, the sudden distant chatter of a machine gun beyond the roof-tops, just to remind us that Ireland had a very long memory indeed; and the talk in the morning-room would stop abruptly and we would draw back our chairs out of line with the window, for fear of a stray bullet. For those were the days of what we called 'the Troubles'.

The longest-remembered people I have ever met were people who could neither read nor write. It is the written and printed word that takes away our powers of memory, and makes us forgetful. I was lucky, I think, to be born in a community where much still came to people by word of mouth; lucky, also, in that I had two very different mouths to listen to. For my mother spoke with a Scots County Antrim accent, but my father, who came from the last Irish-speaking part of County Down, had rubbed shoulders with a softer speech, and I can recall the day, even the moment, when, as a boy, I decided to adopt the softer tone.

## The Importance of Sound

Yes, sound was important to me, and in more ways than one. In church-going, Presbyterian Ulster, where I was reared, the emphasis was always on the Word, and the highlight of the week was the Sunday sermon. There was nothing my father liked better than a good flowery sermon, except perhaps a good floury potato. He was near to God and the ground, and he would mouth the names of the great potatoes—Skerry Blue, Kerr's Pink, Arran Banner, Majestic—as lovingly as he did the names of the generations of great men like Abram and Abimelech, Methuselah and Jesse. There was always this fondness for the rich-sounding language of the Authorised Version, which saved us from a bare-bone puritanism and which led us to look on oratory as the first and fairest of the arts. 'It was a grand discourse', my father would say after hearing a good preacher. 'You should have seen how he took it this way and took it that way, like a dog with a flock o' sheep, and how he rolled and rounded it up at the end'. Yes, the *end*, in Ulster, was important. Life was real, life was earnest, and delight was not its goal. Which no doubt accounts for the fact that, as John Betjeman



remarked to me once, there have been very few Presbyterian poets. For poetry will always dance, and moral earnestness is the rheumatoid arthritis of poetry.

When I was a parson in Ulster I found myself on one or two occasions making a slip of the tongue in the pulpit. Instead of saying 'Let us pray!' I said 'Let us play!' Nobody noticed it; at least nobody dared to notice it. If any small child had gone home and reported that the minister said 'Let us play', he or she would have been soundly smacked. All the same, I did say 'Let us play'. I suppose it was because I was always unconsciously playing with the sound of words in order to escape from the one-track sense of them. Always to be preaching, to be speaking the words of wisdom and moderation, to be advocating moral aims and urging spiritual claims, imposes a human strain on any parson, which doubtless is why, as one sees from the course of English literature, a number of parsons have mounted the winged horse and made a getaway.

Anyway, there we were, pressed between the upper and nether millstones of puritanism, between God and the ground, between Faith that brought rabbits out of a hat and Reason that brought habits out of a rat. So I turned to poetry, which was neither here nor there, neither one thing nor the other. Poetry set me free from the predetermined meanings and the restrictive practices of common sense. As I went about my business I kept playing with the sound of words. Maybe, visiting my parishioners and conversing about the doings of other people, someone would say 'Well, it takes all kinds to make a world'. And I would

take that well-worn phrase, and, as I went along the road, I would keep turning it over and over on my tongue—'It takes all kinds to make a world. . . . It takes all winds to make a curl . . .'. And so on and on, till the sense was gone and the sound itself led me to a new and far different sense. 'For a tune is more lasting than the song of the birds', says the Irish proverb, 'and a word more lasting than the wealth of the world'.

I had found a land where words lived and moved and had a being of their own, a land where ends were meaningless, where language danced on air, and my mother was a moth and my father a feather. I could put it into verse:

In that land all's flat, indifferent; there  
Is neither springing house nor hanging tent,  
No aims are entertained, and nothing is meant  
For there are no ends and no trends, no roads,  
Only follow your nose to anywhere.  
No one is born there, no one stays or dies,  
For it is a timeless land, it lies  
Between the act and the attrition, it  
Marks off bound from rebound, make from break, tit  
From tat, also today from tomorrow.  
No cause there comes to term, but each departs  
Elsewhere to whelp its deeds, expel its darts;  
There are no home-comings, of course, no goodbyes  
In that land, neither yearning nor scorning,  
Though at night there is the smell of morning.

—Home Service

## The Ghosts of Versailles and Others

By A. J. AYER

**F**EW ghost stories have aroused so much interest, or indeed won so much credence, as the story told by Miss Moberly and Miss Jourdain, who claimed that when walking in the gardens of Versailles on an afternoon in August 1901 they witnessed an episode in the life of Marie Antoinette. By their own account, they noticed nothing at the time except that some of the people whom they came across were somewhat strange in manner and somewhat strangely dressed, but subsequent research enabled them, as they thought, to identify most of these characters, including Marie Antoinette herself, and convinced them that the topography of the gardens, as they appeared to them that afternoon, was such as it had been in 1789, and not as it was in 1901.

However, from the start there were sceptics. Most significant of all, the Society for Psychical Research to which, in the autumn of 1902, Miss Moberly and Miss Jourdain sent two separate accounts of their adventure returned them with the comment that the evidence that anything abnormal had occurred was not sufficient to justify the Society in undertaking an investigation. And when their book, entitled *An Adventure*, appeared in 1911, Mrs. Sidgwick, one of the most prominent members of the Society, wrote a review in the Society's proceedings in which she declared that 'it does not seem to us that, on the evidence before us, there is sufficient ground for supposing anything supernatural to have occurred at all'.

This conclusion of Mrs. Sidgwick's has now been pretty well substantiated by the investigations carried out by Mrs. Lucille Iremonger who has recently published a study of the case in a book entitled *The Ghosts of Versailles\**. Mrs. Iremonger's own scholarship is not impeccable, but she does succeed in showing that the way in which Miss Moberly and Miss Jourdain went about establishing the supernatural character of their experience fell a good deal short of the best academic standards. They at no time made any attempt to discover the identity of the persons they had seen, assuming them not to be ghosts; they did not enquire whether there were gardeners working in the grounds on that day, who might have remembered speaking to them. Their researches consisted of looking through old picture books and examining old maps in the hope that identifications would be suggested to them. They 'improved' their story in the second edition of their book, and again in the third. In short, they did not so much find evidence to support their recollections as adjust their recollections to the evidence that they were able to find.

It is not suggested that these respectable ladies were consciously dishonest. But in these matters the will to believe may run away with one's reason. Some people have so strong a relish for the marvellous that they will accept stories of this kind without subjecting them to the critical scrutiny that they would bring to bear upon reports of everyday matters of fact. If the evidence is weak, they will unconsciously strengthen it. An amusing example of this, which Mrs. Iremonger quotes, is provided by the B.B.C. panel of critics who reviewed the last edition of *An Adventure*. Though they must be presumed to have been reading, or re-reading, the book within the previous week, two of them misdescribed the authors' 'proofs' of the supernatural character of their experiences in such a way as to make them a great deal stronger; and no one remarked that they were doctoring the evidence. This was no more than carelessness, but it is the sort of carelessness that with a subject of this kind very easily creeps in. Conversely, there are many people—I suppose that I myself am one—who have a will to disbelieve in paranormal phenomena. When cases which appear to be of this sort are brought to their notice they would like to be able to explain them away, to show that they were due to self-deception or fraud. They set a standard of evidence in these matters which is much stricter than that with which they are ordinarily satisfied.

Thus the domain of the supernatural or, to use a less question-begging term, the paranormal, is one that it is very difficult to study or to discuss impartially. It was for this purpose that the Society for Psychical Research was formed in 1882. I think it correct to say that most of the active members of this Society have been people who were favourably disposed towards the paranormal; they have wanted the stories which they were investigating to be true. At the same time they have always insisted on high standards of proof; they have been active in detecting fraud, especially as practised by professional mediums, and they have been on the watch for evidence of self-deception on the part of those who have submitted stories to them. Their rejection of the claims made by the authors of *An Adventure* is a case in point. It must be allowed, therefore, that any account of a paranormal experience which they have accepted as genuine has at least a claim to serious consideration.

One of the early activities of the Society was to conduct what they called a census of hallucinations. Seventeen thousand persons were asked the question: 'Have you ever, when believing yourself to be completely awake, had a vivid impression of seeing or being touched by a living being or inanimate object, or of hearing a voice; which impression, so far



as you could discover, was not due to any external cause?' In the first instance, they were asked only to answer 'Yes' or 'No': 15,316 of them answered 'No', and 1,684 'Yes'. That is, nearly 10 per cent. of those questioned claimed to have had at least one experience of this kind. Enquiries which were carried out at the same time in France, Germany, and the United States yielded something over 27,000 replies of which nearly 12 per cent. were in the affirmative; a fact which may come as a shock to those who believe that it is the English who are especially addicted to seeing ghosts. But, assuming the persons questioned to be a fair sample of the population, both of these percentages seem to me remarkably high. I am sure that the number of my acquaintance who think that they have undergone experiences of this kind comes nowhere near one in ten. But then it would appear that the number of those who make serious claim to have met with apparitions has fallen off a good deal in the twentieth century. I do not know what significance to attach to this; nor to the fact that, in the English census at least, a marked preponderance of those who replied in the affirmative were women. Perhaps women are, or were, more sensitive to these things than men.

### The Properties of Apparitions

However this may be, there seems to be sufficient evidence, both arising out of this census and in other ways, to make it difficult even for the most resolute sceptic to deny that apparitions have occurred. That is, people do genuinely seem to see, or hear, or feel (but mostly see) such things, in circumstances where there is no straightforward means of assigning them to any physical source. As they are presented in the recorded evidence, these apparitions have interesting properties. One of the most interesting is that they can be seen or heard by more than one person at a time. Thus, in 95 out of the total of 1,087 visual cases, which were analysed as a result of the census, the apparition was seen collectively, and in 34 out of 493 auditory cases it was collectively heard. Some weight, moreover, should be attached to the fact that in the large majority of these instances the persons who had the alleged experiences were alone at the time. If one considers only the cases, both visual and auditory, in which the experiences were enjoyed in the presence of others, then the proportion of instances in which they were shared rises in each field to as high as one third.

Besides being, to this extent, public, the visual apparitions obey the laws of perspective, they can have looking-glass reflections and they can cast shadows. In short, in their purely visual aspect they masquerade very effectively as physical objects. On the other hand, they entirely lack tactual solidity; if one tries to touch them one's hand goes through them; they themselves appear to go through solid objects; they leave no physical traces; so far as I know, there is no well authenticated case of their being photographed. The balance of argument, therefore, is against their being physical realities.

In this sense, then, they are hallucinations. The question is how they are produced. The late Mr. G. N. M. Tyrrell, from whose standard work on apparitions I have drawn my information, divides them into four categories. First, there are those which are experimentally produced: it appears that certain people have been able to induce others at a distance from them to seem to see either the experimenter or some other figure that he 'willed' upon them: cases of this kind are rare. Secondly, there are what Mr. Tyrrell calls crisis-apparitions. These are the cases in which people who are ill, or dying, or in danger, appear to their friends or relatives at or about the time in question, and often, though not always, displaying signs of what is happening to them. Sometimes the apparition is placed in the environment of the person whom it represents, sometimes in the environment of the percipient. Cases of this kind are relatively numerous and well-authenticated. Thirdly, there are the post-mortem cases in which the apparitions represent a person who has been dead for some considerable time; and lastly there is the specific category of ghosts, cases where the apparition frequents a particular place and can be seen or heard by persons who are in that place, whether or not they have any special connection with the character whom it represents. It very seldom happens that such apparitions, or indeed apparitions of any kind, can be both seen and heard, but a few instances of this are recorded.

Mr. Tyrrell's own theory is that apparitions of all these kinds are telepathically produced. This would appear to work quite well for the first two categories; but an obvious difficulty arises with the third and fourth. For telepathy requires an agent; it would seem in these cases that the agent must be identified with the subject of the apparition; but the subject of the apparition is dead. The conclusion which Mr. Tyrrell

draws is that cases of this sort provide evidence for survival: at least some part of a man's personality may persist after death and enter into communication with the living. Now if the hypothesis of survival were acceptable on other grounds, the evidence on which Mr. Tyrrell bases his theory would have at least some tendency to strengthen it. But, for my own part, I find it difficult to make sense of the idea of minds existing in detachment from bodies, let alone fractions of minds; and even if this hypothesis be allowed to be intelligible, the evidence of the causal dependence of mental upon physical processes tells strongly, if not decisively, against it. It is to be considered, therefore, whether we cannot find some other, more plausible, explanation of these unaccommodating phenomena.

There is no lack of candidates, though I doubt if any of them meets all the requirements. The simplest and, to a certain type of mind, the most attractive suggestion is that post-mortem apparitions, of whatever sort, are purely subjective hallucinations. Their source is to be found in the psychological, or physiological, condition of the percipient. An objection to this view is that they may be seen or heard by more than one person at a time. We should expect a purely subjective hallucination to be private. But collective hallucinations of this type do occur, sometimes on a fantastic scale.

A most striking example is the so-called miracle of Fatima, in Portugal, where a crowd of people, estimated in the literature as numbering 70,000, who had gathered together on a day in the autumn of 1917 in the hope of witnessing a manifestation of the Virgin Mary, saw an extraordinary phenomenon. According to one newspaper report 'the sun, at one moment surrounded with scarlet flame, at another aureoled in yellow and deep purple, seemed to be in an exceedingly fast and whirling movement, at times appearing to be loosened from the sky and to be approaching the earth, strongly radiating heat'. In spite of this, the people were able to look at the sun without being blinded nor were they incommoded by the heat. Other witnesses spoke of the objects around them turning strange colours, amethyst in one version, all the colours of the rainbow in another. The whole display was said to have lasted about eight minutes. Since this eccentric behaviour of the sun was not observed from any other place upon the earth outside that neighbourhood, and since no unusual astronomical or other physical effects were anywhere recorded, it can only have been an illusion; but if we have to admit the possibility of illusions on this scale, it would seem almost pedantic to strain at a poor ghost.

It is, however, relevant that these people had come in the expectation of witnessing a marvel and that they were in the grip of strong religious emotion which is not invariably, or even usually, the case with those who see ghosts. And it does seem strange that a series of people, of whom there may be no reason to suspect that they are otherwise prone to subjective hallucinations, should undergo hallucinations of a similar character in the same locality. There is, of course, the fact that in many instances they have already been informed that the place is haunted: and this is likely to exert an influence. But we want an explanation which will cover all the cases: and there are some in which this does not hold.

Another suggestion is that places, which show evidence of being haunted, possess some physical property to which certain persons only are responsive; but these physical properties have yet to be detected. Or again, it may be held that images persist in certain localities, leading as it were a life of their own. This is a hypothesis which anyone but a Humean philosopher would find it difficult to swallow; but perhaps we should not rule it entirely out of court.

### Our Ignorance about Telepathy

Finally, if we fall back upon telepathy as the source of all these hallucinations, in so far as they are not purely subjective, why do we have to assume that the agent must still be existing, in any way at all, at the time when the message is transmitted? Why should not this be a form of causation that operates at a distance in time? The fact is that we know hardly anything about telepathy. We use the word to refer to cases in which people appear to succeed in communicating without the use of any physical means. But to talk of telepathy does not answer the question how this is achieved. It merely poses it. What is needed at this stage is further scientific investigations of the conditions in which telepathy takes place: and not only telepathy but all the paranormal phenomena which it may or may not serve to explain. If it is unreasonable to ignore them, it is equally unreasonable simply to accept them as marvellous. They are marvellous only in the sense that they are uncommon and difficult to account for. If apparitions occur, then,



whatever their status, they are as much a part of the natural world as anything else. To acknowledge them might indeed involve a modification of our views about the ways in which nature works; but this is something for which we must always be prepared. It would be unscientific not to be.

One of the attractions of the Versailles ghost-story was that it suggested that there might be ways of displacing oneself in time, of paying visits to the future or the past. To do them justice, this suggestion was not favoured by Miss Moberly and Miss Jourdain themselves: their idea was that they had entered into the memory of Marie Antoinette. But their story has been used to illustrate the theme of time-travelling which, apart from being taken up by certain novelists and playwrights, has gained popular currency through a misunderstanding of the theory of relativity and also through the writings of the late Mr. J. W. Dunne, especially his *Experiment with Time*. The facts are, however, that the theory of relativity in no way implies that

the same event can occupy incompatible positions within the same frame of reference, and Mr. Dunne's theory is based upon a logical fallacy. Believing as he did in precognition, he assumed that if an event was precognised it must in some sense be already happening: and so he came up with the nonsensical suggestion that future events might be present in another dimension of time. But to say that an event is precognised is to imply not that it is happening but that it will, just as to say that an event is remembered is to imply not that it is happening but that it has. There is no more justification for saying that future events are really present because they are precognised than there is for saying that past events are really present because they are remembered. We travel in space by being at different places at different times: but to be at different times at different times is not even a logical possibility. Whatever claims may be made for ghosts, no longer counting the ghosts of Versailles, the idea of time-travel contradicts itself.—*Third Programme*

## Letters to the Editor

The Editor welcomes letters on broadcasting subjects or topics arising out of articles or talks printed in THE LISTENER but reserves the right to shorten letters for reasons of space

### Must Western Science Decline?

Sir,—In discussing Mr. G. Burniston Brown's talk: 'Must Western Science Decline?' Michael Swan remarks (THE LISTENER, May 16): 'I had not realised that among modern scientists this precise battle [of deductive observation of phenomena versus the ideal mathematical view of nature] is being repeated . . . with Newton standing for the Ionians and Einstein for the Pythagoreans'. I shall not give in to the temptation of rushing to the defence of the Pythagoreans against the charges which Mr. Swan levels at them in such an accusing tone, but conserve my energies for an attempt at dispelling the somewhat gloomy impression left by this talk.

The speaker contends that the 'mathematisation' of science which is taking place today will lead to its eventual decline. It seems to me that the danger lies not in an excessive use of mathematical theories, but in failing to recognise the limitations of mathematical methods, a failing which tends to afflict the layman rather than the scientist who has learnt to use mathematics as a tool. It is only when scientists lose sight of the scope of a mathematical theorem that the danger becomes acute. There is no sign that this is taking place. In fact all the advances which have been made in physics during this century are remarkable for the close interplay of theory and experiment which brought them about; this includes the theory of relativity, which is based on the famous Michelson-Morley experiment.

That the theories have become more mathematical is due not to a love of mathematics by physicists; nor to some dark plot by the mathematicians, but to the fact that at the present stage of development mathematical theories seem most suited to give a precise description of natural phenomena. If this trend continues, we shall no doubt become as conversant with mathematical pictures as the contemporaries of Faraday were with mechanical pictures of the universe, and we shall then no longer be haunted by them.

No one would deny that there always are some scientists (including such Anglo-Saxons as the late Sir Arthur Eddington), really mathematicians at heart, who do wish to build a purely mathematical picture of the world. This is as it should be. But they are not working in opposition to others; they are contributing to the pool of knowledge and of course their con-

tribution is acknowledged only when it has passed the test of experiment.—Yours, etc.,  
Manchester, 14

P. M. COHN

### Child-centred Education

Sir,—I listened to Mr. Bantock's talk (printed in THE LISTENER of May 9) with interest and surprise—surprise that so much thought should be devoted to 'child-centred' education without once mentioning the work of the late Dr. Maria Montessori. I venture to assert that virtually all the difficulties spoken of by Mr. Bantock are overcome in a true Montessori school. This is possible because of the innate and universal love of work that Montessori demonstrated again and again, with all sorts of young children, in a dozen countries. This love of work is soon stifled if it is not given the materials and the atmosphere it needs. Mr. Bantock evidently doubts its existence. Personally I would be doubtful, too, if I had not seen proofs in plenty at the school where my three children enjoy the endless adventures of learning.

At a time when there is talk of five-year-olds attending school only half the day because they are so tired at the end of the afternoon, it is of interest to know at least one school where children of that age, and much younger, finish the day's work refreshed and full of life. At a time when our too-few teachers often struggle with classes of twenty, thirty, or more, it may be of interest that many Montessori teachers actually prefer large classes and often achieve better results with them. At a time when the teaching of science, and therefore mathematics, is so important, it may be worth noting that children who learn, from the beginning, by Montessori methods, have little difficulty with mathematics; for example, finding a square root becomes, literally, child's play, and the child acquires a real grasp of what it is all about.

Certainly something seems to have gone wrong with much of the 'activity' methods in our schools. A real and complete understanding of Dr. Montessori's discoveries would show how to solve most of the problems described by Mr. Bantock. At present the fruits of this unrivalled life-time of observing children—scientific observation illumined by extraordinary insight—are very widely misunderstood and misrepresented.—Yours, etc.,

Cirencester

T. S. BAZLEY

### Brain and Will

Sir,—Of course it would be absurd to argue, as your correspondent Mr. Federico Clark suggests, 'that we think we are morally responsible if we think we think we are [morally responsible]'! But surely it is not metaphysical to say that we think we are morally responsible if we think we think we are morally responsible for necessary actions towards continuity of living existence, not only of ourselves but of humanity generally. So to think is the only true definition to be attached to moral responsibility as long as man thinks of his being alive in a struggle for existence natural to him as a living organism.

Where we go astray is in attaching our moral responsibility towards other than man, towards other living organisms that do not think like man. Other living organisms have their own necessary actions, but those actions are not necessary to us, other than in circumstances of environment in which man has to eat to live. We should certainly object to suggestions of our being morally responsible for anything in the inanimate world, and yet, in circumstances of environment again, we are morally responsible if we think there is any possibility of nuclear scientists completely disintegrating the world of our existence.

But, further, it is an understanding of the above that removes the mystery in our human nature relative to the working of the brain. Why then should we, in wisdom, avoid any temptation to confound the two, as concluded by Dr. D. M. MacKay?—Yours, etc.,

London, S.E.21

R. M. JAMES

Sir,—Dr. MacKay, in the first of two talks (THE LISTENER, May 9), considers the question whether the validity and importance of moral choices could still be upheld if it were known that the brain behaved only according to strictly determinate physical laws. We find certain difficulties, first, in the form in which the problem is posed, and, second, in the argument which leads him to suggest a solution. MacKay puts the problem this way:

The central question is: Could I be excused from responsibility if a choice of mine did not involve any physically indeterminate changes in my brain?

This question assumes that there is another being who does the excusing, and we think that this other being must be specified. When this is done, the question becomes a social or religious one:



it cannot be answered by looking at one brain in isolation.

Our disagreement does not end here, and the argument which leads MacKay to say 'No, I could not be excused' must be set out to show where we think it is false. He says: 'We now know that no behaviour pattern which we can observe and specify is beyond the capabilities of a physical mechanism'; thus it is evident that he accepts that we might, at least in principle, be able to draw a complete blue-print of the brain, presumably describing its function in essentially engineering terms, and this description could be sufficient to describe all brain states with their causal antecedents.

He then argues for a form of logical indeterminacy to allow freedom and moral responsibility. He imagines a super-physiologist able to observe every brain state, of, say, a man coming to a decision. The super-physiologist is imagined able to predict future brain states: he would be in the position of any scientist given adequate knowledge of a physical system. MacKay allows that this might be possible for the brain, but now he says of such a prediction: 'However carefully calculated his proffered description of your choice, you would know—and he would know—that you still had power to alter it'. He goes on to say that the super-physiologist could not estimate the effect of his prediction, and allow for it, without becoming involved in an infinite regress. This, it is pointed out, gives logical indeterminacy and thus, it is suggested, at least some sort of free will. This argument is interesting, but does it help?

Consider a man-made computing machine. If extra information is fed in at the last moment, then the answer will in general be changed by this additional information, and MacKay's case of feeding in predictions is clearly a special case of this. MacKay adds that where the prediction is made silently, such a prediction would be: 'Only conditionally "certain": certain just so long as we do not know it'. And he goes on: 'it is rather an odd sort of "certainty" that you have to hide from someone in case it turns false!' But clearly it does not have to be hidden except from the person, or machine, making the decision. It is not that the 'prediction might turn false' but rather that the prediction will itself be a new causal factor tending to affect the decision. So might standing on the man's toe affect his decision.

In his second talk (THE LISTENER, May 16) MacKay stresses that *physical* indeterminacy is not necessary for moral responsibility. Even if one accepts his argument for *logical* indeterminacy, we do not see how this helps: why should the one be a necessary condition for moral responsibility, the other not necessary?

It is obviously difficult to fit one's guilty conscience into a mechanistic brain: why not admit that guilt arises in a social situation, and that since it does not arise in the description of an isolated brain it need not be fitted into one's concept of how a single brain works?

Yours, etc.,

R. L. GREGORY  
Psychological Laboratory  
H. B. BARLOW  
Physiological Laboratory

Cambridge

### Dilemma of the Personnel Officer

Sir,—Mr. Secar maintains that the relation of personnel officer and line management is the same as the relation of technical specialists and line management. He concludes that since the general manager retains responsibility for technical development, he also retains responsibility for personnel. On the usual organisation chart this is true, but this is a fault of the chart itself, not a justification for the existence of the personnel officer.

The personnel officer is in a logically distinct

category from any other specialist in the organisation. It has never been suggested that the main task of the works manager is technical research and development or accounting or any other speciality—except personnel management. It is an analytic and therefore necessary truth that the main function of any manager is personnel management. What distinguishes a manager from others is the fact that he controls people, and that his work is done through these people; his main duties and responsibilities are therefore towards these people. In other words, the line manager is necessarily in the first place a specialist personnel manager, and is only secondarily a specialist in his own distinct job. When the personnel manager offers his advice to the line manager, he is advising him how best to carry out his chief responsibilities.

Any attempt to teach someone his job is bound to meet with resistance, and the resentment is bound to affect relations with other people. Whereas the accountant's advice is readily accepted, there are nearly always emotional obstacles to accepting advice on personnel management. It is a well known fact that logical argument alone can seldom change attitudes, and this is as much true of the managers as the managed. Therefore, although the personnel officer is by training fitted to give advice, and often very good advice, to line managers, it will seldom have the desired effect of improving human relations—even if it seems on the surface to be accepted.

The solution it seems to me is to train all line managers and potential line managers in personnel management as part of their normal technical course at university, technical college, apprenticeship scheme or elsewhere. It is ridiculous that colliery managers, chemists, engineers, economists, and so on who may later spend most of their time in controlling people are not given any training in the scientific knowledge that has been built up on the subject. There would still be a need for a 'personnel department', under another name, to keep records of employment, training, labour turnover, etc., i.e., to perform, as Professor Drucker puts it, 'the chores of personnel management'.

Yours, etc.,

Llanelli

D. J. LEWIS

### Nielsen's Heroic Symphonies

Sir,—In an otherwise admirable article (THE LISTENER, May 16), Mr. Arthur Jacobs doubts whether Nielsen's use of tonality is perceptible (in all its subtlety) by the listener. Let me emphasise that such things are indeed meaningful as sound. It is significant that Mr. Jacobs refers to tonality as a 'technical characteristic'. The sound of a key is no more 'technical' than the sound of a theme or an instrument. Of course, the ordinary listener cannot be expected to hear everything at first go and Mr. Jacobs seems to adopt the viewpoint of the listener who is hearing the music superficially. He quotes my description of the tonal structure of the slow movement of the Third Symphony—a series of pedals rising by thirds—C, E, G, B flat, D, F—followed by a key completely at variance with the expectations produced by a perfectly audible series. The strangeness of this key (E flat) owes its magic to the regularity of the process which it interrupts.

Nor can there be any serious doubt about one key being 'opposite' to another; the word implies the extreme degree of remoteness between two things—a condition fulfilled by two keys a tritone apart. Such phenomena are for the ear to experience, and are by no means matters confined to 'the musicologist with the score'. In casting doubt upon them, Mr. Jacobs may be depriving himself, and possibly some listeners, too, of a vivid and exciting experience,

one that needs very little more understanding than that of straightforward sonata form.

Yours, etc.,

London, N.10

ROBERT SIMPSON

### Recollections of Wyndham Lewis

Sir,—Mr. Geoffrey Grigson's comparison of Wyndham Lewis and Christopher Marlowe (THE LISTENER, May 16) is at first sight a lucky hit. But he is wide of the mark when he accompanies it with the peculiar remark that Lewis was 'dowered, *unlike Marlowe* [my italics], with intelligence'.

Surely, if asked to name 'a Hero of Intellect and Imagination' (to use Mr. Grigson's words of Lewis) among the Elizabethan dramatists, one would infallibly point to Marlowe. For Marlowe, like Lewis, never suffered fools gladly. Had he not been quietly disposed of by his secret-service friends in that little room of the Deptford tavern at the end of May 1593, he would almost certainly have suffered publicly and more horribly for his 'damnable opinions'.

One had supposed that the absurd old idea of Marlowe as an inspired drunkard, who wasted his time brawling in pubs, had been scotched long ago—even were the brilliant, diamond-hard poetry not there to confute it. It is odd to find Mr. Grigson reviving it at this time of day.

Yours, etc.,

London, N.W.3

PHILIP HENDERSON

### 'A Classic Statement on Broadcasting'

Sir,—A correspondent has pointed out that I was wrong in implying (THE LISTENER, May 2) that the Royal Commission recommends that the CBC Board of Governors should continue. In fact the abolition of the present CBC Board of Governors is suggested (page 93) and 'the appointment of one full-time officer of the CBC as 'president' and another as 'general manager' is recommended (page 167), neither to be members of the newly established Board of Broadcast Governors.

Yours, etc.,

Keele

GEORGE BARNES

### Aunt-frightening Island

Sir,—Although I cannot feel that it is a matter of much moment, yet in the interest of accuracy I should like to support the contention of both Lt.-Col. H. Jarrett-Kerr and Mr. J. Cuthbertson that my cousin, the late Major Lambert Dopping-Hepenstal was the original inventor of the automatic tea-kettle, from which, indeed, I have often had tea.—Yours, etc.,

London, S.W.5

JOAN E. DOPPING

### Dream Railways

Sir,—I hate to disillusion anyone as enthusiastic as Mr. Jennings (THE LISTENER, May 9) but his railways are neither forgotten nor part of a dream world. Rather are they part of another of British Railway's peculiar publicity campaigns. On our station is a new poster, headed in large type:

'See old world England.

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These, Sir, are the trains.—Yours, etc.,

East Horsley

I. MACPHERSON

### Sir Charles Wyndham: 1837-1919

Sir,—I am engaged on a biography of Sir Charles Wyndham, the actor-manager (1837-1919), for which Sir Bronson Albery has made available the letters to Sir Charles in his keeping.

I should be very glad to hear from any of your readers who have letters or other information about Wyndham, particularly his early years, and about his family, the Culverwells.

Yours, etc.,

17, Western Avenue,  
N.W.11

GEORGE ROWELL



# NEWS DIARY

May 15 - 21

## Wednesday, May 15

Commons begin two-day debate on Government's Suez Canal policy

A British nuclear device is exploded in the central Pacific

French Government decides to refer the Suez problem to the Security Council

Labour Party publishes plan for a national compulsory superannuation scheme

## Thursday, May 16

Prime Minister makes statement in Commons about explosion of British nuclear device and says that the Government intends to continue with the present series of tests

Opposition motion of censure on outcome of Government's Suez Canal policy is defeated by forty-nine votes. Fourteen Conservative M.P.s abstain from voting

Nineteen persons are killed and much damage is done by tornadoes in Texas

## Friday, May 17

French National Assembly begins debate on Government's Bill for financial reforms

Ministry of Supply publishes details about the nuclear tests

Commons debate standards of conduct by the press

## Saturday, May 18

King Feisal of Iraq and King Saud of Saudi Arabia publish a joint *communiqué* on their talks in Baghdad

H.M. the Queen and H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh sail from Hull for Copenhagen in the royal yacht

## Sunday, May 19

Prime Ministers of India and Ceylon jointly call for suspension of atomic and hydrogen bomb tests

A new Italian Government is formed by the leader of the moderate Christian Democratic Party

Heavy damage is done by floods sweeping through Oklahoma

## Monday, May 20

Engineering unions accept employers' wage offer

Security Council discusses Suez Canal

Mr. Bulganin suggests to French Government direct Soviet-French talks on European security and other subjects

## Tuesday, May 21

H.M. the Queen and H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh arrive on State visit to Denmark

Prime Minister makes statement about success of nuclear test in the Pacific

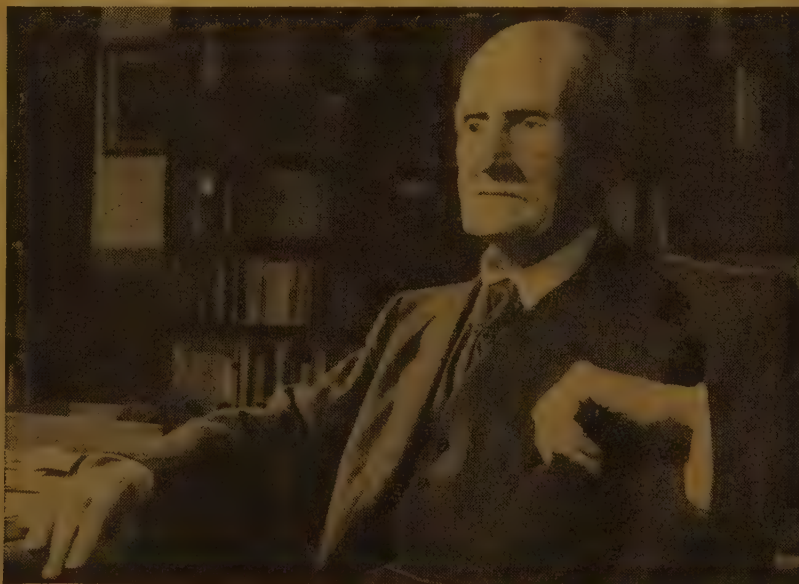
Group of Privy Councillors to study possibility of reducing burden on Ministers

President Eisenhower sends message to U.S. Congress about need for foreign aid

French Government is defeated on vote of confidence



The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh leaving Hull last Saturday to embark on the royal yacht *Britannia* for their three-day State visit to Denmark. Before leaving they had made a seven-hour tour of the city of Hull



Dr. Gilbert Murray, the great Greek scholar who died on May 20, aged ninety-one. He was appointed to the chair of Greek at the University of Glasgow at the age of only twenty-three and he later returned to Oxford where he held the Regius Professorship of Greek for twenty-eight years. By his translations, particularly of Euripides, he communicated the spirit of the Greek classics to a wide public. Dr. Murray was chairman of the League of Nations Union for fifteen years and subsequently, until his death, President of the United Nations Association. In 1941 he was admitted to the Order of Merit



The Reading Room of the





to the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh: Their  
ng Frederik IX and Queen Ingrid of Denmark. The  
he Duke will remain for two days after the State visit  
ests of the Danish royal family at Fredensborg Castle



Japanese students demonstrating  
outside the British Embassy in  
Tokyo last week after the first ex-  
plosion in the series of British  
nuclear tests had taken place over  
the Pacific on May 15



hich celebrated the centenary of its opening on May 18. An exhibition marking the  
view in the King's Library of the Museum until the end of June



A model of a high altitude research rocket which is included in a  
'pre-view' exhibition at the Science Museum, South Kensington, on  
the International Geophysical Year which opens in July





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## Summer Books

# Lord Halifax's Recollections

*Fulness of Days.* By the Earl of Halifax. Collins. 25s.

Reviewed by LORD ATTLEE, O.M.

**I**N *Fulness of Days* Lord Halifax gives us what he, with characteristic modesty, calls a marshalling of random recollections which may add a mite to the total impression of an age. He does not profess to write a full-scale autobiography nor does he indulge in any wide reflections on the events in which he has himself played a notable part. He has contented himself with a limited objective. The result is that he has written a charming and readable book and has painted a very vivid picture of the world as he has seen it.

Those of us who have passed the Psalmist's allotted span find that while our early years stand out with almost photographic clarity, recording accurately the merest trifles, clouds seem to obscure far more important happenings of recent times. It is, therefore, natural that Lord Halifax's account of his early years is the best part of his book. Here we have a true picture of an age that has passed away, Victorian England, in its sunset phase, before the advent of the internal combustion engine destroyed its inward peace and its island security. We see the England of the great country houses with the county families closely allied by birth or by friendship, the ruling classes as they still were.

Lord Halifax was born into a great Yorkshire family and his account of his early days spent for the most part at Garrowby with the large family circle, the numerous servants and the round of simple pleasures is admirably done. What distinguished the background of his life from that of other kindly foxhunting aristocrats was the intense religious life of the family. His father was for many years one of the most prominent Anglo-Catholics and his son a no less devoted adherent of the Christian faith and of the Church of England in particular. It was natural that Edward Wood should go to Eton and Oxford. What was not so usual was that he should get a first in history and an All Souls fellowship. It is characteristic of our author that he tells us nothing of what he thought or even of what he read at Oxford. He took his learning like his hunting as a matter of course.

It was equally a matter of course that he should be a Conservative and in due time be chosen as the candidate for the safe Conservative seat of Ripon. It is, I think, again characteristic of Lord Halifax that he gives no sign of ever having any particular views apart from those of his party. He does not show any special interest in parliament and indeed in this as in other secular matters gives the impression of being slightly bored. Perhaps that is due to the intensity of his spiritual life.

After serving in the first world war Lord Halifax was given office in the Coalition Government of Mr. Lloyd George, but formed one of the group of younger Tories who led the revolt which ended that administration. I should think it was perhaps the unethical methods of the Prime Minister that moved him to rebel. As a Minister in the Baldwin Governments, Halifax made no special mark and might have been regarded as, in the words of a Conservative poet, 'an amiable aristo', but Mr. Baldwin with great judgement selected him to succeed Lord Reading as Viceroy of India.

Lord Irwin, as he then became, sailed for India in 1926 to meet a tense situation with the rising tide of nationalism on the one hand and increasing tension between Hindu and Moslem on the other. Lord and Lady Irwin were conspicuously successful in gaining the respect and affection of all classes and creeds in India and his Viceroyalty must rank among the greatest. In this book he makes an interesting specula-

tion as to what might have happened but for the factious attitude of Sir Winston Churchill and a handful of diehards in the House of Commons which delayed the passing of Sir Samuel Hoare's Indian Bill. I think with him that there was a good chance of having had a united India as a Dominion, but that there is a tide in these affairs. Often swift action is the path of wisdom. Delays and long debates caused dissension and suspicion. The favourable moment passed so that later a surgical operation was necessary. Characteristically he makes no reference to his own action in later years at the time when I had to

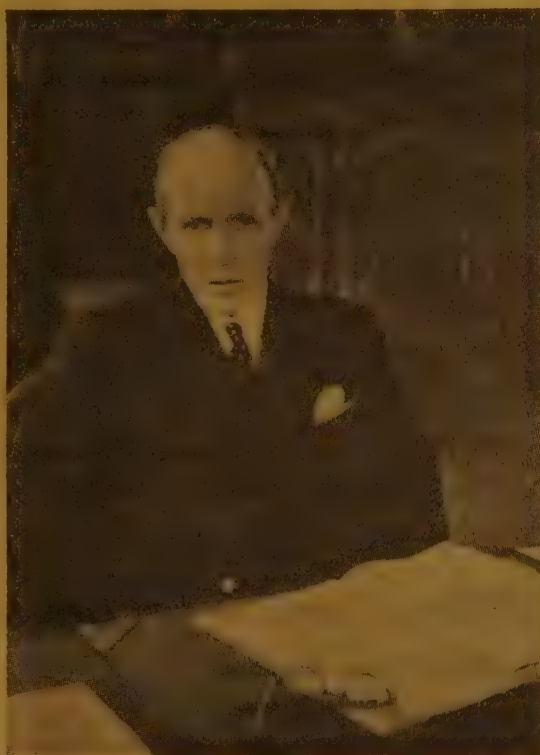
deal with the Indian problem. His speech in the House of Lords prevented a division in that House at a critical time when the acceptance of the Indian proposals of the Labour Government hung in the balance. It is interesting to learn that on leaving India the Viceroy received a tribute from a number of young European non-officials recognising his statesmanship and pledging themselves to co-operation with Indians in building the new India, a pledge that has been fully kept.

A less happy period succeeded when he became Foreign Secretary in Mr. Chamberlain's ill-starred administration. Lord Halifax does enter into the controversies of that time. He shows a broad tolerance by saying that had he not been in the Government he would probably have been one of the critics of Munich. He himself does not seem to have had any independent views on foreign affairs, but to have been content to follow Mr. Neville Chamberlain to whom he is impeccably loyal. In the crisis that ensued on the Norway debate, there was a possibility that Lord Halifax might have been made Prime Minister, for it is sometimes forgotten how deep in the Tory party was the distrust of Sir Winston Churchill at that time, but he himself recognised that his position in the Lords, with Sir Winston in the Commons making the running, would have been an impossible one.

The need for the closest liaison with the United States caused Sir Winston Churchill to select Lord Halifax for the post of Ambassador. There were those who wondered whether it was a wise selection. It was recalled that Lord Halifax was what was called a man of Munich, that he was a typical British aristocrat who, they said, would not go down with the Americans. He had too that British habit of understatement which was said to irritate our trans-Atlantic friends. That he had this is undeniable. I recall well a discussion in 1940 on invasion when Lord Halifax said: 'They might land on the Lincolnshire coast and that would be a bore'. However in the event the critics proved wrong. Whatever his alleged disabilities Lord Halifax soon won a high position. It was a triumph of character. The Americans recognised quality.

Lord Halifax is still with us and long may he remain doing much public work both in Yorkshire and on the wider stage, happy in his family and many friends who will read this book with great enjoyment. I remember Jos. Wedgwood saying one day apropos a certain Conservative M.P.: 'If we must have a Tory, he might at least be a gentleman'. I would say if we must have Conservatives, let us have men of the stamp of Lord Halifax.

*Ghana: A Brief Political and Economic Survey*, which has been prepared by the Information Department of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, is being distributed by the Oxford University Press, price 5s.



Lord Halifax

From 'Fulness of Days'



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## The Rationalist

**Bertrand Russell: the Passionate Sceptic.** By Alan Wood. Allen and Unwin. 21s.

MR. WOOD'S BIOGRAPHY has been published for Bertrand Russell's eighty-fifth birthday, and so far as biographies of living men go it is acceptable enough, entirely well meant and, for a large part, quite well done. The expository as distinct from the biographical chapters are the more successful, though Russell's life rather than his work is Mr. Wood's main theme.

It is a life that falls into two contrasting halves. Up to the age of forty or so Russell was almost exclusively a scholar; he lived quietly, a teetotaller, married to a Quakeress, abstemious, retiring, frugal. In those years he wrote (with Whitehead) *Principia Mathematica* and the rest of his most important philosophical works. In the second half of his life he has been a publicist, and all the excitement and the colour of his story belongs to these later years. He has reversed the usual pattern: with him the mature achievement came first, the youthful adventures afterwards. Moreover, to judge from the photographs Mr. Wood prints, Russell has even grown to look younger; the face in the early pictures, with the moustache and the sad eyes and the solemn expression, has none of the energy, verve and gaiety of the later portraits.

Russell has always been a rationalist; though this is not to say that he is, or ever was, the 'passionate sceptic' of Mr. Wood's title. Orphaned in infancy and brought up by his grandmother on the most austere of Puritan principles, he forsook religion in his adolescence; but he did so for reasons which bespeak, not a sceptical disposition, but a valiant zeal for truth; and mathematics, which was the consolation of his lonely childhood, had for him a positively romantic charm. Mathematics appealed to a yearning for perfection in him and, what is more, it fired a faith in the possibility of perfection, which is the reverse of scepticism and which he has never wholly lost.

A Leibnizian preoccupation with mathematics as the model intellectual system is a characteristic of Russell as a philosopher. He is the greatest logician since Aristotle, but his work is not of comparable stature in the untidier departments of philosophy, such as ethics and epistemology; and while he is one of the progenitors of the new school of analysis, he has little patience with anything so essentially piecemeal and informal as 'the philosophy of ordinary language'. His most illustrious pupil, Wittgenstein, once said of him that he suffered in his later years from 'lack of problems'. Philosophical problems, Wittgenstein meant; of practical problems Russell has had an abundance since he ceased to be a man of the library and became a man of the world. He earned his spurs in public controversy as a champion of women's suffrage, but it was in the 1914 war that he became famous as a rebel. Too old to be a conscientious objector, he made his protest as a public speaker and pamphleteer. Mobbed, dismissed from his lectureship at Cambridge, jailed, he threw on persecution. When the 1918 armistice came, and there was such an intense and very natural reaction against the war and all the Victorian values that had made it possible, Russell found himself a spokesman of the intellectual *avant garde*, indeed of a whole new generation which was bitter about the past but also—and this is a point that should never be forgotten—filled with zeal for the new ideas, the Russellian ideas, of peace and social justice and sexual freedom and progressive education and, above all else, of happiness. Can this be called scepticism?

Admittedly Russell makes jokes about religion. He does not judge by bourgeois standards; he sees no especial excellence in chastity, property, prudence, military glory, imperial achievement, or the English public schools. But nothing could be farther from scepticism than his unwavering belief in human reason. The recurrent theme of all his writings as a publicist is that if only men would cease to be unreasonable their troubles might soon be remedied. Once again, the perfectionist is not so very far beneath the surface—however flippant, Voltairian and provocative that surface may be.

It is Russell's beliefs, not his want of belief, that have kept him for most of his life hard up. In the nineteen-twenties he ran his school to put his educational theory into practice; his idea was not, as many people thought, to let children do as they pleased, but rather that their natural instincts should be trained instead of thwarted. Unfortunately his business sense did not match his aspirations, and the experiment proved costly. In the 'thirties he went to America, apparently the only place where he could earn enough as a visiting professor of philosophy to

meet all his responsibilities. But soon he was in difficulties once more. He was judiciously pronounced unfit to occupy the chair of philosophy at the City College of New York on the grounds that one of his books had proclaimed the 'immoral and salacious' doctrine of companionate marriage; and not long afterwards he was peremptorily dismissed from the Barnes Foundation in Pennsylvania for, among other peculiar reasons, 'defending British imperialism' in public debate.

Russell returned to England in 1944, and has since had something of the recognition his genius deserves: the O.M., a Nobel Prize, and his place at Trinity restored to him. He supported the second war, on the wholly consistent utilitarian principle that whereas a compromise with the Kaiser would have meant less suffering than fighting, a compromise with Hitler would have meant more suffering than fighting. But he has relinquished nothing of his radicalism, his rationalism, or his devotion to the cause of peace. He has used his world-wide influence in the past few years on behalf of two particular objectives: the abolition of nuclear weapons and the creation of a supra-national government. Characteristically his projects are ambitious ones; and characteristically he fastens his hope for their achievement on human reason.

His biographer is somewhat inhibited when it comes to saying what a delightful, amusing and stimulating man Lord Russell is; but perhaps, thanks to his many talks on the wireless, people generally have already learned that for themselves.

MAURICE CRANSTON

## Mum (and Dad)

**Family and Kinship in East London.** By Michael Young and Peter Willmott. Routledge and Kegan Paul. 25s.

BIT BY BIT the complex social life of the British Isles is being mapped out. We know a little about rural Wales, the scattered homesteads of Cumberland, and the Irish peasant. Liverpool and Oxford, Sheffield and Coventry, Nottingham and Tiger Bay have had some of their secrets revealed. And now life in Bethnal Green is portrayed by Michael Young and Peter Willmott of the Institute of Community Studies. They have made an admirable job of it; just the right amount of description to bring the dry bones of their statistical evidence to life. Nearly a thousand families, chosen at random, were interviewed, and forty-five of them were investigated in greater detail.

It turns out once again that our stereotype of the isolated 'nuclear' family is wrong. The families in Bethnal Green are caught up in a network of kin, from whom they receive services and to whom they owe obligations. It is not, to be sure, quite on a par with the kinship systems of primitive peoples; it is more permissive, more personal, and less uniform. Nevertheless it is very real, and through it any individual family gets introduced into an even wider network of friends. The system is shallow, and constantly changing as old people die and young people migrate; it is narrow as cousins marry and second cousins get lost sight of. The key to the whole structure is 'Mum': 'Mum's is the family rendezvous'. That is where brothers and sisters, aunts and cousins congregate. The predominance of Mum has been found elsewhere, in Mogeys's Oxford, in Acton, in 'South Borough' over the river, and in Dr. Madeleine Kerr's vivid (and alas unpublished) study of Liverpool's 'Ship Street'. 'I couldn't get along without me mother', said one of Dr. Kerr's informants, 'I could get on without me husband. I don't notice him'. The warm tie between daughter and mother is, after all, not surprising. The daughter has spent a lot of her time helping Mum with household duties, and relies on her for help when she gets married and has children of her own. No wonder marriage tends to be what the anthropologists call: 'matrilocal'. The men are attached to their Mums too, but get drawn into the orbits of their wives' families, somewhat resentfully it must be admitted: 'For myself', said one of them, 'I've nothing against my mother-in-law . . . but I'd like to get as far away from her as I possibly can'. But even he would probably not want to move very far. The inhabitants of Bethnal Green are devoted to it: 'I suppose', one of them remarked, 'people from outside think it's an awful place, but we established ones like it. Here you just open the door and say hello to everybody'. 'Awful', in a sense, it is, with many of the houses almost tumbling down, and few of them having anything that one would call adequate plumbing.

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lovely little houses with little gardens and all mod. con.: 'Greenleigh', an L.C.C. housing estate, absolutely smashing. And yet: 'When I first came', said Mrs. Sandeman, 'I cried for weeks, it was so lonely'. No little shops and barrows round the corner, no cinema for miles, only one pub for 5,000 people, instead of one for every 400 as in Bethnal Green, and—worst of all—no Mum. A few of them seem to like it, but most of them stay on for the sake of the kiddies and because there is nowhere tolerable to live in back in Bethnal Green. The quality of life changes. It is too expensive to visit Mum very often and there is no one they know personally, with all his or her charms, foibles, and bad qualities. The only basis of judgement—and this is one of the authors' most interesting points—is external appearance. This means eyeing and being eyed, appraising and being appraised in terms of clothes, curtains, TV sets, and motor cars, all the time being aware that they are being looked down on by a parcel of 'toffee-nosed' middle-class folk who inhabit an agglomeration of houses next door.

But, it may be asked, will not 'Greenleigh' grow into another Bethnal Green in course of time, with all the outfit of mums, aunts, and grans? Not unless more houses are built for the young people when they marry, or unless vacant houses are let to children born on the estate, which does not appear to be the present policy. The authors make a plea, not only for the continuity of 'Greenleigh', but also for the refurbishing and rebuilding of Bethnal Green itself.

It is a fascinating book, and it goes to show how valuable such sociological inquiries could be to local authorities, who usually haven't a clue. On putting it down we look round for more. We have learnt a lot about Mum and Dad, and let no one think we are sick of them, but it would be nice to know a bit more about their grandchildren, Gary and Kevin, Maureen and Gloria; it would be even nicer to be told something about Mummy and Daddy, but they, unhappily, are less accessible.

W. J. H. SPROTT

## A Bedouin of the Press

**My Indian Mutiny Diary.** By William Howard Russell.  
Cassell. 30s.

**The Indian Mutiny.** By Major-General Richard Hilton.  
Hollis and Carter. 18s.

WHAT AN EARTHQUAKE to shake to pieces, what a volcano to smother with lava and ashes, has this mutiny been! Not alone cities, but confidence and trust have gone, never more to be restored! A hundred years after the outbreak of the Mutiny we can see clearly that this disfiguring episode in our imperial history was not, as Late Victorians came to pretend, a glorious second conquest of India, but the physical and emotional watershed of British rule. With all its faults, the old East India Company, which vanished in the 'lava and ashes' of the revolt, had attempted to govern the sub-continent with some regard for its time-honoured customs and institutions. This personal basis was absent from the rigid European pattern of administration which was set up in 1858. But surely we can now see that our attempt to rule a country as huge and alien as India must have been doomed from the start, although we made an impressive shot at it. After all, it is a task which is difficult enough even for Indians themselves.

William Howard Russell, war correspondent of *The Times*, the only British newspaper to send a reporter to the seat of the war, discerned these and other issues with a clarity remarkable for a man involved so closely in the turmoil of his age. The despatches of this 'Bedouin of the pen', as he here describes himself, from the Crimea, India, and later North America place him in the first rank as a war correspondent and among the wisest and most myriad-minded observers of his day. His Mutiny diary, originally published in 1860, is perhaps the most perceptive early account of the episode and also one of the most purely exciting. True, he arrived in Bengal when the military outcome was no longer in doubt, but he was not too late to plunge into the furious fighting of the final phase.

His humour, spirited style, intense curiosity and highly developed visual sense combine to make his diary an incomparable record of the epic events that it contains. His account of the sack of Lucknow or his adventures at Bareilly deserve a place in any anthology, and on occasion remind one of an embattled George Borrow. One cannot fail

to be entertained by the energy and resource of a man who will shoot open a tin of tongue with his revolver or climb the Ochterlony Monument in Calcutta before breakfast. Yet, again, it is the humanity and political awareness of this much-travelled man that make the strongest impression on the modern reader. He writes about his contemporaries with extraordinary frankness. Side by side with a portrait of some Englishman of whom we have every right to be proud, we find the portrait of some Englishman of whom we have every cause to feel ashamed. In short, he paints a picture of a tremendous imperial crisis—a picture which in its grandeur, its squalor, its *mélange* of idealism and meanness, is as inspiring as it is honest.

Mr. Michael Edwardes has edited the diary with tact and skill, and his twenty-seven-page introduction is the most impressive exposition of the origins and consequences of the mutiny that I have read. It can be recommended to all who are interested in the history and ethos of the Empire. I would not agree with him that 'the British learned nothing from the Mutiny: they added hatred to indifference'; but I would certainly agree that 'from the first murder of European civilians at Meerut and Delhi, the English threw aside the mask of civilisation and engaged in a war of such ferocity that a reasonable parallel can be seen in our own times with the Nazi occupation of Europe and, in the past, with the hell of the Thirty Years War'. It was precisely because the British believed themselves to be more civilised than their opponents that they had a corresponding duty to adhere to a civilised code, to behave with justice and restraint. This they failed to do, although against that failure must be set the bravery, chivalry and devotion of an Outram, an Inglis, a Peel, a Henry Lawrence and a host of other English soldiers and civilians. There is an abiding lesson which Englishmen and peoples of other nations can still learn from such tragic episodes as the Mutiny: the lesson that '*les représailles sont toujours i. utiles*'. History, alas, tends to forget good men and generous deeds; but it never under any circumstances forgets vengeance and panic cruelty.

Major-General Hilton seeks in his study of the Mutiny to gloss over the crimes which the British, no less than the mutineers, committed between 1857 and 1859. He also strives to excuse or explain away the blunders of a score of British commanders whose incapacity was exposed even in Victorian times. (Russell himself deals trenchantly with some of them.) This is regrettable, for with his specialist knowledge of military matters he might have provided a narrative of the campaign to stand beside that of Lieutenant-General Sir George MacMunn; but Sir George's *Indian Mutiny in Perspective*, published over a quarter of a century ago, remains the best concise military account of the Mutiny.

JON MANCHIP WHITE

## Plucking at Housman's Heart

**A. E. Housman: a Divided Life.** By George L. Watson.  
Hart-Davis. 25s.

THERE SEEMS A KIND of poetic justice attaching to the posthumous reputations of tragic ironists. The cutting out of Thomas Hardy's heart and its burial separately from his body is a theme for a poem by Hardy. That, all within a matter of months, A. E. Housman's manuscript notes for poems, many of them heavily deleted, should have been published, and now the most closely guarded secret of his emotional life exhumed in Mr. George L. Watson's graveyard prose, seems irony of a similar kind. Mr. Watson tells us that Housman filled pages of notebooks with epigrams of abuse awaiting their target. For example, 'Nature, not content with denying to Mr. X the faculty of thought, has endowed him with the faculty of writing'. The reader is tempted to reflect on the irony of the failure of any of these shafts to find, in Mr. Watson's volume, X, the posthumous bull's eye.

Feeling for style is obviously essential to an understanding of Housman, and one could use this book to illustrate the theme that no naming of the poet's nameless love and unnamed lover, no psycho-analysing of his father-hate and mother-fixation, can 'explain' Housman if the revelations are in words and manner of which the following is a fair sampling:

Insofar as the inception of poetry can be traced back to a simple origin, it was in Housman's case, as in that of so many English poets, the influence exerted by the local landscape upon a responsive temperament. From the Faery Queen to Four Quartets, some native scene has



pervaded the poems of every period; and in the formation of poetic sensibility, geographical factors have played a more than subordinate part.

Well, the biographical factors that play an insubordinate part in this book are chiefly revelations about A. E. Housman's suppressed homosexuality, which Mr. Watson hammers into a familiar psychological machine. Housman's father was a failure, an incompetent wool-gatherer drifting to a drunken grave—in a word, the best possible father for a poet of genius. His mother was both dominating and ill. As a boy A. E. Housman developed a 'fixation' on her. When he went to London for Christmas holidays in 1874 (at the age of fifteen) he wrote home to his mother '... I think of all I have seen, what has impressed me most is—the Guards. This may be barbarian, but it is true'.

At Oxford, Housman fell in love with M. J. Jackson, a member of the St. John's College crew. Jackson seems to have been patient with his admirer, and the platonic friendship, passionate on Housman's side, lasted after they went down from the University. For some time, almost until Jackson went to India, they shared lodgings in London. More inexplicably, Housman was 'ploughed' in his Finals, and was thus for many years denied the Oxford or Cambridge academic career which would doubtless have freed him from the compulsion ever to write a line of poetry.

His long obscure years as a clerk at the Patent Office, his Chair at London University, his ferocious editing of Propertius, Manilius and other poets, his compensatory triumph of a chair at Cambridge, the slow but sure success of *A Shropshire Lad* and *Last Poems*, the let-down lecture entitled *The Name and Nature of Poetry*—all these landmarks are well known in a life evidently devoted to the Great Grievance and the Greater Compensations. With two striking photographs of Jackson coupled with the caution that 'Housman... pledged himself never to infringe the iron code by which he was, in fact, no less bound than his contemporaries', it may seem that the Housman mystery, like most mysteries, has been explained, and therefore dismissed, once and for all. To my mind, the only possible reason for being moderately grateful for Mr. Watson's revelations is that—apart from the real value of the early chapters about his forebears and childhood—they remove the mechanical aspect of Housman's psychology and introduce the real mystery. It is this: Why, after all, was Housman unable to find any way out of his predicament, through human sympathy with others in the same situation? Why did he send *A Shropshire Lad* to Oscar Wilde in gaol, write a moving poem about his trial, but never, so far as is recorded, attempt to meet Wilde or to help him in any way?

A Woolwich cadet shot himself at the age of eighteen, leaving a letter in which he explained that he was doing so because he knew that he had no earthly chance of obtaining the only thing in life that would make him thoroughly happy; because he was certain that he could not live another five years without, in the Biblical sense, 'offending someone else'. Deeply moved by this report, Housman wrote the beautiful: 'Shot? So quick so clean an ending/Oh that was right, lad, that was brave'. While identifying himself with the boy dead, it did not seem, on any level of his mind, to occur to Housman that if his pity for a suicide was real, then he must also pity a great many people in exactly the same situation, and still living. The situation which was a door opening on to death, also opened on to life. Yet he seemed only concerned with *post mortems*. Pity, after all, is an extremely suspect emotion, unless in some way it extends one's sympathy for the living. Housman's pity had this suspect quality of being immediately changed into objectified self-pity—a child mourning over the spectacle of his own death while he is still alive. If instead of committing suicide the cadet in question had written a letter to Housman identifying himself with *A Shropshire Lad*, one suspects that he would either have had no answer from the Latin prof. or received a crushing retort. It is

amazing that no word of Housman shows any awareness of this sentimental fallacy in his attitude to the dead and the living.

All this is not a criticism of Housman so much as of those like Mr. Watson who infer a psychological mechanism from a poet's circumstances and then conclude that this 'explains' the poetry and the man. A list of Housman's psychological misfortunes explains that he had misfortunes, but it does not explain why he so utterly failed to overcome them. It does not explain why a man so gifted, so admirable, so truthful, had such a dog-in-the-manger death-bed view of the courage that he was always writing about.

Perhaps the answer is that Housman's genius could function only within narrow, almost stupefying limits. In this case, the mystery of Housman is a mystery of the devious ways whereby poetry achieves its aims through a poet, rather than a neurotic scholar's case-history. The view of Housman as an exceptionally curmudgeonly self-repressed pervert loses sight of him as a poet who wrote lines which have an incisiveness that suggests words not so much written on paper as hewn in the clearest possible lettering on stone:

So set, before the echoes fade,  
The fleet foot on the sill of shade,  
And hold to the low lintel up  
The still-defended challenge-cup.

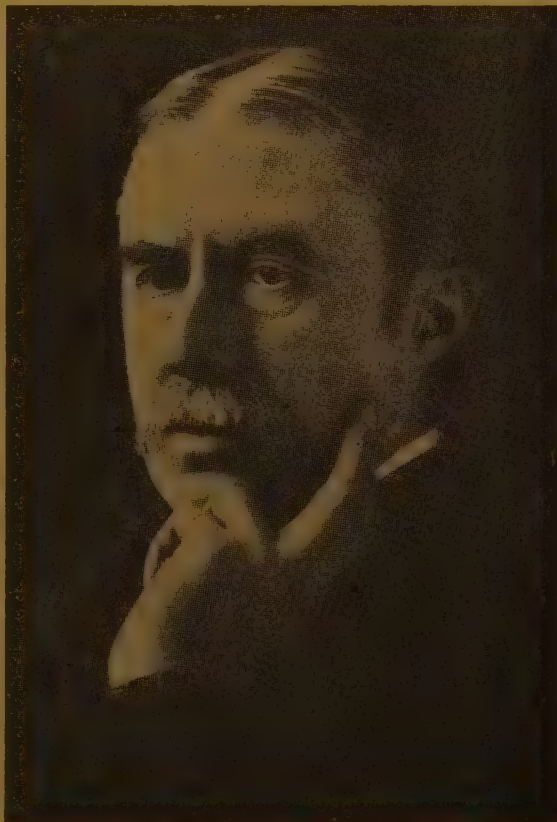
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A. E. Housman in 1911  
From 'A. E. Housman: a Divided Life'



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Mr. Catton manages to make us feel the changing attitude of the Union soldiers not only to warfare but to the War and its aims. At the outset, for the enlisted man the War is an adventure, even a frolic; for the regular officer, a trial of arms; for even the most articulate no more than a campaign to put down rebellion and preserve the Union. Gradually we sense a hardening of conviction. A Pennsylvania private, moving into Virginia, learns the facts of Southern life: 'the soil may be sacred, but we sacrilegious Yankees can't help observing that it is awfully deficient in manure'; and his fellows discover that the Negro is no banjo minstrel but a poor, pathetic human being, an inescapable responsibility who cannot be pigeon-holed as 'contraband' property. The conflict acquires revolutionary overtones, and the Northern drive for victory only gains momentum when men reach the conviction that it must be a total effort to destroy the very basis of Southern society, State's rights or no State's rights. Then the moment is ripe for General McClellan, who seriously considered rejecting publicly Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, to retire in favour of a general with a new sort of will to win. The author may perhaps have isolated unduly the anti-slavery element in the struggle, but he performs a considerable service in demonstrating its power to shape the convictions of Union soldiers. By this, as by his threnody on the tragic companionship of war, he is fully justified in giving his book its highly charged title: *This Hallowed Ground*.

FRANK THISTLETHWAITE

## Two Poets

*Visitations*. By Louis MacNeice. Faber. 10s. 6d.

*The Sinai Sort*. By Norman MacCaig.

Hogarth Press. 12s. 6d.

TO HAVE MADE THEIR NAMES and been inextricably associated in the 'thirties must be a standing annoyance to Messrs. Auden, Spender, and MacNeice. It must make it much more difficult for them to write poetry. Their work, when it first emerged, immediately became connected in the public mind with revolt and reform; they had an excited, not narrowly literary, audience who provided just the sort of pressure that the showman in every writer needs. Now they have to win their way with a new generation, politically genial, personally angry, with different expectations of the poet.

Mr. MacNeice rides the change of fashion pretty well, even if not without signs of strain. Essentially a sensuous, personal, singing poet, his inward danger, as for most rhetoricians, has been that of being influenced too readily himself. But his insincerities (poetically speaking) have been constant. This new volume of poems contains the same number of struck attitudes and the same percentage of merely juke-box tunes as his earlier work—but no more. The false note has always crept into Mr. MacNeice's music whenever he has tried to generalise importantly in response to some imagined need in his audience. The poems that disappoint are those in which he seems determined to pass from

the particular to the universal, determined to prove that he is moving forward to new mental explorations. This applies to all the seven poems grouped under the title 'Visitations', except for the excellent third, which one suspects was written separately and slipped into the series. Disappointing too are the topographical poems, which do not rise above the level of lantern-slide lectures; nowadays every poet back from Dieppe gives one.

The sharp-shooting, hit-and-miss lyrical poet has to take the risk of scoring more 'maggies' as time goes on. At the end Roy Campbell was missing the target altogether at point-blank range. But Mr. MacNeice can still be as limber and accurate as Gary Cooper. The mannerisms (the rhetorical questions and the compulsive assonances) may have hardened and the clear colours may go cloudy when the gourmet flirts with mysticism, but the seemingly easy, technically arduous lyric dealt like a card trick with a jaunty touch and a wink that clears the vision, the sharp contemporary portrait, the whiffs of nostalgic music—they are all still there in poems like 'Sailing Orders', 'Figure of Eight', 'The Back-Again' and 'Donegal Triptych'. You may get less for your money but it is still value.

Mr. MacCaig's poems come praised by Mr. MacNeice, rightly, for they are very interesting: whether they satisfy as well as stimulate is more difficult to decide. You would not think that anyone who could write something as simply effective as

Red cattle drift in the deep pools of clover.  
Dust burns in the light, which yellows these four roofs  
And makes one marigold of that useless acre.  
Beetles fall into clay cups made by hoofs  
And whining hornets aren't and are. And smoke  
Above each chimney draws one pale blue stroke

would also be a poet in whom expression seems tormentedly cut off from experience. Mr. MacCaig's main theme, shot from a variety of engaging angles, is the feeling of alienation from, or fusion with, Nature or a loved person; but it is the feeling of alienation that prevails and even in the end comes to affect the poetry, which has a curiously dissociated air—the image separated from the thought by a gap which the current just fails to leap, the moral falling apart from the explosive and decorative description like a motto from a cracker. Mr. MacCaig reasonably enough wants to be more than a nature poet, a species which has a future as dismal as the horse's. He would like to rewrite Wordsworth with recaptured metaphysical vision, to resurrect that much-lamented sensibility which could, we are told, unify into one experience Spinoza and the smell of cooking.

Judging each poem as a whole the attempt does not succeed. Either an echo of Donne reveals false Jacobean panelling in the construction, or the temperature generated by the emotion is not high enough to weld together the disparate elements. Patchily, Mr. MacCaig is one of the more exciting poets writing. A poem such as 'Landscapes Old and New' is unqualifiedly good. Others arouse curiosity and admiration, but as one cranes forward one feels the touch of glass on one's forehead: technique, so good it is invisible but so conscious it is impassable, has intervened.

JAMES MICHIE

## From Jane Austen to Joyce

*The Mirror in the Roadway*. By Frank O'Connor.

Hamish Hamilton. 25s.

'LITERATURE', SAYS THE AUTHOR of this 'Study of the Modern Novel', 'is a very impure art'. Perhaps, if a definition can be extracted from despair, the novel can be said to be the apotheosis of that impurity. Neither life nor art, it gives us the one for the other, according to which way you look at it. Yet the novelist, over the past two hundred years, has succeeded in doing what the poet can no longer do. He creates a 'world', in a sense that cannot be applied to Tennyson or T. S. Eliot. On the basis of his own reasoned or instinctive selection from the laws of human psychology—the one thing, as Tolstoy said, that you can't invent—he creates an autonomous, limited, but self-sufficient universe. That is why generalisation about the novel, about the mutually exclusive worlds created by the great novelists, is almost impossible, and why a book that begins, like this one, with Jane



Austen and ends with Joyce, ought on the face of it to be a wilder excursion than anything in the way of space-travel.

Fortunately, Mr. O'Connor's attempts to establish continuity and likeness between his subjects are few and slender. Yes, we may agree there is a little something in common between Miss Austen and M. Stendhal, or between those three great fantasists, Gogol, Balzac, and Dickens. But every one of these essays goes to prove that a novel is the work of an unprecedented individual born at a particular place and time. A creative writer himself and a master of his own particular field, Mr. O'Connor approaches his subjects with the perception, the prejudice, and the will to understand with which the writer must approach life itself. He can see, better than any purely 'professional' critic, what it is his author is getting at and what drives him. He writes from a life-time's deeply felt experience of his subjects—and in a style that talks easily off the page.

Prejudice is there, of course, from the outset. Why include Turgenev and James in a book which excludes Melville and George Eliot? And is Chekhov strictly a novelist? Why tell us that *Madame Bovary* is 'possibly the most beautifully written book ever composed' when anyone, at this date, can see that it is one of the clumsiest? It was simply Flaubert's passion for 'writing beautiful' that deluded a generation of admirers into thinking that he had succeeded in doing so. Nearer home, Mr. O'Connor is not so easily taken in, and he gives us a devastating analysis of a page of beautiful writing by Joyce. It takes an Irishman to 'do' an Irishman in this way, and the attack on the great Dubliner is as irrefutable as it is one-sided.

More often, the author can hit off the prevailing feel of his subject in a sentence: as in this one on Dostoevsky: 'In him . . . the logical superstructure of the mind has been damaged, and what he presents to us as crime may prove not to be crime, while what he presents to us as repentance may well prove to be its opposite'. Or this, on Balzac: 'Sometimes the realistic engine breaks down, and then we are aware only of the glowing furnaces of fantasy which drive it'. And what could strike more neatly at the root of nineteenth-century English pessimism than this?

The insular temperament has reserves of idealism unknown to the cynical Latin, and the shock, experienced by an Englishman when he discovers that God does not play cricket is often an overwhelming one.

To quote the author on Henry James—'To be deeply corrupted yet not corrupting, one must develop a stammer'—is to be reminded how invariably the writer links the man with the work. The method is successful because the novel is, after all, a romantic phenomenon, a personal symptom. It fails resoundingly when it hits that impenetrable object, a classic. That is why Mr. O'Connor's diagnosis of *Mansfield Park* goes so wildly astray. To condemn that book because it is not *Pride and Prejudice* is like condemning 'Coriolanus' because it is not 'Romeo and Juliet'. To write a novel expressing a conceivable point of view instead of one personally and passionately held is evidently not an allowable thing. Certainly it doesn't often happen. If it did, Mr. O'Connor might more often have proved wrong-headed, instead of the provoking and penetrating critic he turns out to be. This must be the liveliest book on its subject for many a day.

DAVID PAUL

## A Play a Day

British Radio Drama, 1922-1956. By Val Gielgud.  
Harrap. 15s.

IT IS SOMETHING MORE SUBSTANTIAL than party manners that prompts an expression of reasonable pride in the achievements of sound broadcasting in this country; as compared, for instance, with the commercialised chaos in the United States where, as Mr. Gielgud says in his new book, 'the flight from "steam-radio" to television has become an admitted rout'. Among these achievements the work of the Drama Department, which since the war has found an audience of a million and a quarter for 'World Theatre', and of seven or eight millions for lighter plays, must hold a high place. Whether he will have it or not, much of the credit must go to Mr. Gielgud himself for his devoted work for the Corporation in the last thirty years. Yet his survey of British radio drama from 1922 to 1956 (which, apart from a modesty at times

positively morbid, and an index that has never heard of Shakespeare, is admirable) raises once more an alarming general issue, of which the rapid development of sound broadcasting in one generation, and the still more headlong rush of television in recent years, provide the most ominously spectacular examples.

The achievement of mechanised media of communication is the distribution of news, knowledge, art, and entertainment to a dispersed nation-wide audience, to say nothing of services to audiences overseas. Yet these machines, as though from malignant motives of their own, seem bent on reducing to dust the artistic standards of their manipulators. There is an insane quantitative crescendo aggravated by a novelty neurosis; a paradigm of the extractive, exhaustive, erosive trend of our general industrial economy, which the story of sound drama appropriately dramatises. Mr. Gielgud points out that:

Whereas the London stage might present, on a rough average, a hundred plays a year—including revivals of classics and a number of fairly dubious shots-in-the-dark at the smaller 'try-out' theatres—the B.B.C. was already faced by a demand for double that number in 1930, while today its output lies between three hundred and fifty and four hundred pieces of all kinds.

In other words, a play a day. This means, of course, not only an even higher proportion—popular preferences apart—of mediocre or worse 'plays' and adapted fictions than commercialism inflicts on the West End, but also impossible demands on the artists—more particularly on the limited number of producers—whose standards, in the circumstances, remain quite incredibly high. 'It has to be admitted', writes Mr. Gielgud, 'that mass-production—which in the long run radio-dramatic schedules were bound inevitably to imply—tended to call for a steady routine efficiency rather than for brilliant examples of individual artistry. . . . The maintenance of standards of quality in the face of the need for quantity was already recognised, and has remained ever since (1930), as almost the least soluble of the B.B.C. Drama Department's problems'.

There is not only 'the persisting and insoluble problem' of 'finding a sufficient quantity of material of quality' but also 'that persistent bugbear, insufficiency of rehearsal time'. 'In the early days at Broadcasting House it was not uncommon for an elaborate production to be rehearsed for the better part of a fortnight'. In the war emergency 'it was seldom possible to give any production, however complex, more than forty-eight hours of rehearsal in the studios actually used for transmission'. Afterwards 'it was not easy to make a convincing case for a return to axiomatically longer rehearsal-time' and 'the average period for "Saturday-Night Theatre" or "Curtain Up!" is three or four days. Matinees, however, seldom get more than two days, while instalments of serials, lasting for half an hour, are generally rehearsed and put on the air in the course of a single day'. 'Six days for the most esoteric of Third Programme productions is exception rather than rule'. A producer has to do the 'homework' on one drama script while 'also engaged on the later stages of two or even three other productions'.

This is bad enough in sound broadcasting, where the actors, at least, do not have to be so word perfect as to be independent of their scripts. A main reason for Mr. Gielgud's withdrawal from control of television drama also, in 1950, was his objection to a yet more suicidal system in which 'camera-rehearsal time still averaged only two days, with little prospect of increase'. In short, the sheer momentum of the daily service which presents a play, in one performance, to more people than would see it in a year's run in the West End, forces the National Theatre of the Air, for all its freedom from commercialism and, in sound broadcasting, its already precarious monopoly of the medium, remorselessly down to a modest repertory standard, with, of course, magnificent exceptions.

I must not give the impression that this is where Mr. Gielgud places the main emphasis. But perhaps the most impressive thing about his book, which ambles amiably over all the important points and diversifies them with some charming and amusing anecdotes, discreetly chosen, is the unintended sense it gives a careful reader that here was and is a very human being, quietly but determinedly striving to keep the human and artistic elements in disembodied drama uppermost on a juggernaut impersonally bent on reducing such temperamental and intangible expendables to mere raw material for mechanised mass production. Not for the first time one wonders how long we can go on like this. But one's sense of gratitude and admiration for Mr. Gielgud and his producers and actors is appreciably heightened by this apprehension of their unenviable predicament.

ROY WALKER





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By John Clive. Faber. 25s.

'IF SOME BEING from another climate', wrote Madame de Staël to Lord Glenbervie in 1815, 'were to come to this and desire to know in what work the highest pitch of human intellect might be found, he ought to be shown *The Edinburgh Review*'. How did it come about that within a few years a periodical founded by a group of obscure and impecunious young men had become not only the principal organ of English Whiggery but also one of Europe's leading critical journals? In his scholarly and well-written book, covering the first thirteen years of the *Review*'s history, Professor Clive has supplied the answer.

The principal factor in the *Review*'s success was the extraordinary brilliance of its contributors. Francis Jeffrey, Francis Horner, and Sydney Smith, its founders—joined later by the erratic Brougham—were all men of unusual ability. Jeffrey became a Scottish law lord, Brougham Lord Chancellor, and Horner, had it not been for his premature death, might well have been Prime Minister. Sydney Smith, although the coveted mire eluded him, was destined to become the greatest of English wits. Scarcely less important was the high rate paid for contributions, thanks to the munificence and far-sightedness of Archibald Constable, the Edinburgh publisher. 'If you will give £200 p.a. to your editor', said Sydney Smith, 'and ten guineas a sheet [to the contributors] you will soon have the best review in Europe'.

Politically the standpoint of the *Review* was that of the moderate Whigs. 'On domestic subjects', wrote Walter Bagehot, 'the history of the first thirty years of the nineteenth century is a species of duel between *The Edinburgh Review* and Lord Eldon. All the ancient abuses which he thought it most dangerous to impair, they thought it most dangerous to retain'. Free Trade, penal reform, abolition of the old wasteful form of poor relief, were all championed by the *Review*, but it would be mistaken to imagine it in any way Jacobin. The expression of such views in the opening years of the nineteenth century would have ensured its immediate failure and in any case were not held by the founders. Cobbett referred to them as 'Northern leeches' and in 1807 was subjected to a viriolic attack by Jeffrey in which he enunciated the classic Whig view of the Constitution. In England, he maintained, rank, wealth and influence were the chief sources of influence over individuals, and provided that these elements were proportionately represented in a Parliament enjoying free speech, the liberties of the people would be adequately protected. The mode of election was merely an irrelevancy. Only once did the *Review* depart from this policy of moderate constitutionalism, when the 'Don Cevallos' article of 1808 not only supported the Spanish patriots but violently attacked the upper classes. The article aroused widespread opposition; subscriptions were cancelled, the *Review* denounced as a 'quarterly Cobbett', and Walter Scott pushed forward his plans for a rival journal. Jeffrey learnt his lesson and such dangerous sentiments—Brougham inevitably appears to have been responsible—were never again allowed to disfigure its pages.

Political moderation was combined with a mordant, clever, style and an invective which caused a sensation when the first number was issued. Jeffrey's 'destructiveness' was too much even for Sydney Smith who remonstrated with him about its abuse. 'What's the use of virtue? What's the use of wealth? What's the use of honour? What's a guinea but a damned yellow circle? What's a chamber pot but an infernal hollow sphere? The whole effort of your mind is to destroy'. This 'destructiveness' led to the notorious attack on Wordsworth's 'The Excursion' in 1814 and, whatever the views of posterity, it won favour with contemporaries and was good for sales. 'The world has given judgement', wrote Bagehot. 'Both Mr. Wordsworth and Lord Jeffrey have received their reward. The one had his own generation, the laughter of men, the applause of drawing rooms, the concurrence of the crowd: the other a succeeding age, the fond enthusiasm of secret students, the lonely rapture of lonely minds'. Privately Jeffrey wept tears over Wordsworth's poems and has been accused of making the attack for commercial reasons. Professor Clive is more charitable. Jeffrey applied a dual standard, holding it the duty of a critic to judge poetry by its approach to universal associations, but leaving him free to follow his personal bent in private.

The 'Don Cevallos' and 'Excursion' articles were only aberrations,

and on the whole the tone of the *Review* is a remarkable anticipation of the 'masculine sanity' which G. M. Young has selected as the predominant characteristic of the Victorian Age. Free Trade economics, high seriousness, praise of virtue, industry, and middle class morality, even reproaches of French writers for indecency and censure of Nelson's relations with Lady Hamilton can be found in its pages. The mid-Victorian combination of Puritanism and Enlightenment can be traced directly to its influence and Professor Clive is to be congratulated on throwing further light on this most baffling of nineteenth-century paradoxes.

NORMAN ST. JOHN-STEVAS

## Jack and Bill

They Hanged my Sainly Billy. By Robert Graves, Cassell. 21s.

The Road to Tyburn. By Christopher Hibbert. Longmans. 16s.

CRIMES AND CRIMINALS appeal to different classes of people for different reasons. The sportsman finds the whole business as exciting as a play, the tracking down of the guilty being especially thrilling. The morbid person wallows in the more gruesome aspects of the affair, whether violent or callous. A few people, who could be called normal if there were a norm in human nature, regard the act and the actor as bred of a faulty social system or as part of the imperfection of life, and possibly fancy themselves as victim or villain but for the grace of God. There is also a class of folk who take what they believe to be a scientific interest in the matter and who call themselves criminologists. They seem to think that 'the criminal' is a special type, a psychological freak, a phenomenon, and they write books, hold debates, make speeches and arrange dinners to discuss the subject. Such gatherings of men and women, eminent in various professions, tend to make the average person believe that there is something quite extraordinary and even mystical about famous law-breakers; and criminals on a really large scale, like Attila, Napoleon, Hitler, and one might mention Stalin if his former friends and admirers had not already done so, become national heroes.

However the hobby of criminology is harmless enough and no doubt keeps a number of respectable people out of mischief. But the intelligent reader, if he cares to study the lives of notable wrong-doers, will soon discover that most of them were obtuse, unimaginative, mentally defective and singularly dull, though in certain respects quite amiable and inoffensive, and sometimes as cute as monkeys. Take the two cases under review. William Palmer was a fellow who spent money like water and raised a lot more by forgeries that were bound to be discovered unless he could win vast sums on the racecourse. Obviously an ass. Mr. Robert Graves believes that he was innocent of the murders of which he was suspected, and of the one for which he was convicted; but if so, he had only himself to thank for arousing so much suspicion, his idiotic behaviour being enough to hang a far more saintly person than his mother believed him to be. The disagreement of the doctors as to whether there was strychnine in the body of the man he was supposed to have murdered, seven being in favour of death by poisoning, eleven against it, should have secured an acquittal; but Palmer had evoked popular hostility by a libidinous private life, and, what was worse in British eyes than murdering a wife, by doping racehorses. Moreover his absurd conduct over insurance policies had antagonised the companies concerned, and it is clear that his condemnation resulted from his own stupidity. Mr. Graves has effectively put together the stories of those who were concerned with 'my saintly Billy' and almost convinces us that Palmer was a wronged man, while leaving us with the feeling that his death was due to natural causes. His fellow-townsmen however believed him to be a diabolical murderer and petitioned the Prime Minister for an Act of Parliament to change the name of Rugeley because of the notoriety given it by Palmer the poisoner. 'By all means, gentlemen', said the P.M., 'so long as you name your town after me'. But they did not relish the idea of calling it Palmerston.

Our next case is more interesting because the background is more picturesque. Jack Sheppard was brought up in conditions of degrading poverty. As a young man he became a skilled locksmith and might have done well in his profession if he had not early developed a taste for drink and women. Neither could be had for love, so he began to thief for money. Soon he was arrested, but he managed to escape. In fact



his life henceforward consisted of arrests and escapes. The most remarkable of his disappearances from gaol suggest that he was a sort of eighteenth-century Houdini, though Jack was always obliging enough to reveal how they were engineered. Apparently nothing on earth could keep him safely under lock and key. Fetters, handcuffs, chains: he broke them or filed through them or wriggled out of them. Soon he became a popular idol, and bets were given and taken on his chances

of capture or detention. His last famous escape from Newgate would have appeared miraculous if he had not explained it away merely as an arduous method of leaving prison. He was re-arrested because he was foolish enough to parade London in stolen finery, getting drunk at taverns in the company of prostitutes. Altogether a rather likeable half-wit, whose story is admirably told and whose period is vividly sketched by Mr. Hibbert.

HESKETH PEARSON

## A Square World

Piet Mondrian, *Life and Work*. By Michel Seuphor. Thames and Hudson. £6 6s.

Mondrian. By David Lewis. Faber Gallery. 15s.

NEITHER MICHEL SEUPHOR nor David Lewis tries in his essay on Mondrian to step outside the world that he himself created. Lewis offers an excellent introduction to the orthodoxies about him, an enthusiastic gloss on his own stated programme. M. Seuphor's work is valuable for its many illustrations which cover all periods of the artist's work. As for the text one cannot avoid the impression that the author has long since said his say about his old friend for it is casually put together, often rhetorical when the pictures are spoken of and, although gossipy about a few details of Mondrian's life, avoids any serious definition of his relationships with other artists. This last is a pity, for perhaps first among the things one would wish to read about this mysterious, isolated and fanatical artist is a substantial description of his connections and exchanges between the years 1908 and 1919.

While he is explaining Mondrian's development towards his mature style, David Lewis writes of him penetrating 'to the unity which lies beneath nature's external and transitory aspect'. Gradually advancing from picture to picture he unsheathed this law of unity in nature and turned it into a clear law of human construction. It seems to me that to do critical justice to Mondrian's art it is necessary to do more than to take his own statements at their face value. What is interesting is to know why he was so sure that he had discovered the 'formal law of the absolute', 'the law of unity in nature' and so on; because it was of course precisely this certainty that kept him going for twenty years along what must have been the narrowest corridor ever chosen by a painter. For understanding of any artist's attachment to his style, his obsession and his consistency are surely only to be found when we see that his style is the exercise of a set of rules (in the sense of rules of a game) which formalise and define his strongest and most personal feelings about the world. And it is only possible to do this when we stop pretending that a new style equals a new kind of art. In the case of Mondrian, now that we know more of his earlier work, the famous later ones begin to look more like *pictures* and we see in them a personal solution whose clarity and objectivity can only be compared with that of an artist like Vermeer.

All pioneer work towards abstract art was at any rate in part concerned with symbols, with the development of subject matter on a new level. What one might call the expressionistic side of Mondrian's enterprise is made clear in notes in which he connects vertical and horizontal lines with a list of qualities that start with masculinity and femininity and become more and more metaphysical. 'The positive and the negative are the causes of all action, they cause the loss . . . of happiness. . . . They account for the impossibility of happiness in time'. These phrases, reprinted by M. Seuphor, are from notes written in 1914 when Mondrian was making drawings at the seaside for the earliest abstract

works. Here he establishes more openly and more succinctly than in any of his later essays the symbolic value that he attached to the forms he was using and what it was that he intended to do with them. 'The union', he says, 'of the positive and the negative is happiness'. An adjustment, then, an equilibrium, a perfect resolution of opposites that embodied happiness itself: no wonder the simplest (he would have preferred 'purest') forms were enough to work with since for him they could bear so great a load of desire.

The last realistic pictures, the cubist and first abstract ones, stand apart from all the rest of his work in that their equilibrium is concentrated in the centre of the canvas; one receives the impression of the picture as an isolated object beautifully constructed, an island ruled by a good king. This is not the impression given by the earlier works (up to 1909) nor by the mature ones. The early landscapes are simply well composed pieces chosen from the world outside. And the later works, like the one illustrated, return to this openness. There is no core to them, however well they balance, and often we feel that the canvas is just one aspect of a much larger structure; we feel, against all sense, nearer to Monet than to Cézanne; we think of an image selected from an extended world of such forms. And this of course is what they are meant to be: fragments from an ideal world in which the tragic played no part.

He called the earliest pictures tragic and rejected them for the same reasons, because they were only the best that he could do in the circumstances of actual life, pot shots which could only wing and never nail the target. Ten years of experiment from 1909 onwards were devoted to developing the rules that would allow his nostalgia and his Utopianism to become explicit on their own terms. It became necessary to postulate an imaginary man of the future who would recognise 'the universal expressed with precision'. Such a man would live free from the dominion of nature; his metropolitan surroundings would be unmarked by accident or the individual and uncontrolled. 'It will certainly be colder', exclaims the art-lover in Mondrian's dialogue called 'Natural Reality and Abstract Reality', to which the new artist replies 'Colder for those whose feelings are individual but more intense for those whose feelings are universal . . . .'

Mondrian's abdication from the present was one of those double moves whose results are paradoxical: whatever there was in his ideas and his art that could be connected with his time, moved out into architecture and design and now meets the eye of whoever is alert to it. But as to his position as a painter, one would say that few have been less universal or more idiosyncratic; for if any art is universal it is certainly not that which invents a map of the country it intends to invade, but that which wages its campaigns in a land that actually exists.

ANDREW FORGE



'Composition with red, yellow and blue' (1927), by Mondrian  
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The Divell a bit I'de a marry'd at all.  
She smil'd, and presently told me her mind:  
She had vow'd she'd never do more so,  
Because she was cozen'd (in being too kind)  
By three or four men before so!

runs slap contrary, in diction as in sentiment, to Victorian notions of the proper manner and matter for verse. So it is that, indeed from as early as the middle of the eighteenth century, the 'traditional' ballads have provided a never-failing source of inspiration to poets as various as Scott, Coleridge, and Swinburne, whereas the 'popular' ballads have been barely dismissed, if mentioned at all, with a brief reference to 'illiteracy' or 'degeneracy'. Present-day temper has somewhat altered. We are apt to rate living language more highly than the beautiful but dead, and whatever may be said against the street singer's use of language, it could hardly be accused of not being alive—if anything, it is frequently too much so:

When he married his sweet wife  
He didn't care for nothing,  
He used to lace her stays  
And then tie up her stockings;  
He kissed her lovely lips,  
What a darling he did think her,  
But she soon gave him the slip  
And bolted with the tinker.

One may add that any age in which, like ours, the poet is painfully aware of the hiatus in communication between himself and the general populace at large, is bound to look with peculiar nostalgia on the genuine products of the popular muse—now practically confined to ballads of military bawdy (a few of which are to be found amongst the high-kilted appendices of the restricted edition), printing and education between them having succeeded in killing off all oral literature except what is, generally speaking, unprintable.

The editors indeed hope that 'young poets of the present age [will] obtain from these Street Ballads a stimulus comparable with that which Coleridge and Scott received from the rediscovered oral ballads of the late Middle Ages'. The hope may be somewhat hopeful. Yet, if it should come to pass, it would be no bad thing; and even a glancing influence would provide a valuable correction to the current cult of super-fantastication and over-intensity. The street ballad, say Messrs. de Sola Pinto and Rodway, 'is never metaphysical and rarely romantic. It is the product of the Muse of the common man, who is prompted rather to take her to bed, as it were, than to analyse her or set her on a pedestal and adore her'. Certainly a glance at any anthology of contemporary verse will suggest that a little less deep-analysis and a little more taking-to-bed would make the current Muse a happier and a healthier woman. This welcome and stimulating

anthology, edited with excellent aesthetic sense and bringing together, as it does, material previously to be culled only from a wide dispersion of specialist volumes, should at least indicate some promising avenues to seduction.

HILARY CORKE

# Scientific Explorer

Things Worth While. By Evelyn Cheesman.  
Hutchinson. 21s.

THIS IS A REMARKABLE BOOK by a remarkable person. Miss Cheesman has made eight 'one man' expeditions to collect natural history specimens in New Guinea and the south-west Pacific islands, the latest only three years ago at an age of more than three-score years and ten.

Miss Cheesman is, as might be expected, a person of forceful character which is, however, softened by great charm and sympathy. Her childhood was spent in a then remote country village in Kent where with her brothers and sisters she delighted in the natural history of the unspoilt countryside. Her love of natural history gave her the ambition of becoming a veterinary surgeon, but at the turn of the century few careers were open to women and the veterinary profession admitted only men. She had to take what was almost the only employment open to women of her social standing—she became a governess. After some years of this work and a year teaching English in Germany she had a severe illness, and when she was recovering her doctor 'reiterated at every visit the delinquency of ignoring innate trends of temperament which indicate our destiny. He knew the value natural history held for me. . . . I visualised for the first time an occupation in which I should be required to pursue these absorbing subjects which now I could only snatch in moments of leisure'. She got herself apprenticed to Sewell, King Edward's veterinary surgeon, and became a trained canine nurse; for several years she was very happy and successful in her work.

At the end of the first world war, during which her knowledge of German was useful in one of the departments at the Admiralty, a chance introduction led to her taking charge of the Insect House at the Zoo. She did wonderful work in reorganising the exhibits and making the house a model for what such things should be in those days. In the early nineteen-twenties a queer sort of combined amateur and scientific exploring expedition was organised, and Miss Cheesman obtained leave of absence to join it as entomologist. After some months the organisation of the expedition broke down, but not until after it had visited the Galapagos Archipelago, the Marquesas Islands, the Tuamotu Atolls and the Society Islands, where Miss Cheesman was indefatigable in her entomological studies and collecting. At last she had found her destiny.

On her return to England she transferred from the Zoo to the Natural History Museum where she worked for some time on the collections of insects she had brought back, and published some of her scientific results. With her published work to back her she submitted plans for a solo collecting expedition to the New Hebrides and, rather to her surprise, was successful in obtaining a modest grant in aid of the expenses; she hastily set off before second thoughts could withdraw it. The expedition, which lasted several years, was an outstanding success and provided a mass of valuable scientific material. As always, the solving of certain problems only produced new ones—which meant further expeditions for Miss Cheesman. In successive journeys she visited Papua, New Guinea and the adjacent islands, New Caledonia and the Loyalty Islands, everywhere gathering a harvest of the greatest scientific value.

Her expeditions were no hurried visits to snatch a collection of the more easily obtained insects and to gain a superficial knowledge of the country, but lasted for months and years so that she really got to know and understand the lands of her sojourn and their native inhabitants. Her book is no plodding account of travels and specimens, but a most lively and readable story of the fascinating islands of the Pacific, of their peoples, and of the adventures that befell this extraordinary person in her scientific explorations. Her indomitable spirit is shown by the way she set off in 1953, after an operation to replace an arthritic hip joint with an artificial one, at more than seventy years of age to revisit the scene of some of her early experiences.

L. HARRISON MATTHEWS



# CRITIC ON THE HEARTH

Weekly comments on B.B.C. programmes by independent contributors

## Television Broadcasting

### DOCUMENTARY

#### The Bounds of Television

LAST FRIDAY AFTERNOON, children and, I am sure, an enormous crowd of grown-up gate-crashers had the unique privilege of being conducted 'Round the World in Forty Minutes' by the Duke of Edinburgh. It was a delightfully informal programme in which His Royal Highness described in vivid detail some scenes and events of his journey in the royal yacht *Britannia* last winter, and showed us a number of photographs and films and also a selection of the strange miscellaneous objects he brought back with him. These he exhibited and explained often with extremely amusing comments. It was a wonderful programme and all the more so in that it extended itself beyond the promised forty minutes to something much nearer an hour.

'This Is Your Royal Air Force' was by far the most impressive programme, both as a technical feat and a spectacle, that 'Now' has given us, and for the vast majority of viewers it must have been, as it was for me, an astonishing, thrilling, and appalling revelation both of what science has achieved and of the feats and ordeals which skilful training has enabled the airman of today to perform and endure not merely in moments of crisis but all in the day's work. The numerous close-ups of the work on the ground and in the air of Fighter, Bomber, Coastal, and Transport Commands and of the work of the Institute of Aviation Medicine gave an exhibition of sheer efficiency which filled me from first to last with astonished admiration.

It was a privilege to have an authoritative and admirably clear commentary on these scenes from Air Chief Marshal Sir Dermot Boyle, Chief of the Air Staff, who answered questions put to him by Raymond Baxter at frequent intervals through the programme and discussed points arising from the recently published Defence White Paper. I have already said that the display filled me with admiration, but, I must add, not only with admiration but horror at the thought that all this imagination, skill, bravery, and vast expense is used not for the happiness and well-being of mankind but for the protection of one-half of a mad world against the other.

'This Is Your Royal Air Force' was a programme which would have been impossible before the days of television, but the choice of television as the medium for 'Fighting for the Vote', the first of a series called 'First Hand', made failure a foregone conclusion. For what visual records of the campaign for votes for women have survived? Only some old photographs of Mrs. Pankhurst and others who played an important role in the movement, a few snapshots of critical occasions which doubtless appeared in the press, and some old films of processions and disorderly incidents in which, owing, I presume, to some technical snag when they are shown in television, everybody trotted

and waddled along in a deplorably comical fashion. Many of the women who took part in those 'battles long ago' are dead and most of those still alive have ceased today to be familiar even as names, and it was a pity to present a selected few of them on the screen so briefly that none had an opportunity to contribute any detailed impression of her experiences; nor did time allow the commentary to be anything more human than the hustled history which presents a colourless succession

comical. But it is not only his wisdom and wit that are enjoyable. In an age when the art of conversation is all but extinct it is a constant pleasure to listen not only to what he says but to the style in which he expresses it—a style which is at once precise, shapely, and completely natural.

'Panorama' was in good form last week. Among its items was a polite but pointed exchange of opposing views between Professor (formerly Rear-Admiral) Morison of the U.S.A. and Sir Arthur Bryant on the subject of the Alanbrooke Diaries; and, by way of valuable propaganda, Richard Dimbleby trailed a child's nightgown across an electric fire and then held it between finger and thumb while it blazed viciously—held it so long indeed that for an awful moment I feared that Mr. Dimbleby would be cremated before our eyes, a scene which would have been carrying hot news much too far.

MARTIN ARMSTRONG

### DRAMA

#### Fighting Men

'LET'S GET DOWN to brass tacks', says someone in 'Jonathan North'; and they do. This play is 'drawn in brass'. Its men jut their jaws at each other; you know that if jaw meets jaw, the clang will be brazen. 'Brass is brass, love', says Jonathan. Stern men brandish figures with a brassy assurance. It is a typical northern period piece that no doubt shames the false, fleeting southerner, composed of equal parts of straw and blotting-paper. Ashamed or not, he may feel guiltily glad that Jonathan's world was not his.

The very name is a label. 'Jonty' is of the fictional north, hard-headed, thrusting, avaricious; none of your la-di-da. His variety-artist sister (splendidly done by Daphne Anderson) says of him that he is as brazen as a knocker and would skin his very teeth. Still, because he was imagined by the late James Lansdale Hodson, who had a firm and truthful way with these period fighters, Jonty gets our unwilling sympathy. He is a man as well as a collector



H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh speaking in Children's Television on May 17 about his journey last winter in the royal yacht *Britannia*

of events and dates. In short it was a scrappy programme which never took us below the surface, nor can I see how those who planned it could possibly have made much more of it with the material at their disposal.

An altogether delightful programme was that in which Bertrand Russell discussed aspects of his own life and life in general in answer to questions from Lady Barnett. Lord Russell has come to regard the human race with a genial cynicism, a benevolence without illusions, and this has the effect of making his observations on that subject both enlightening and highly

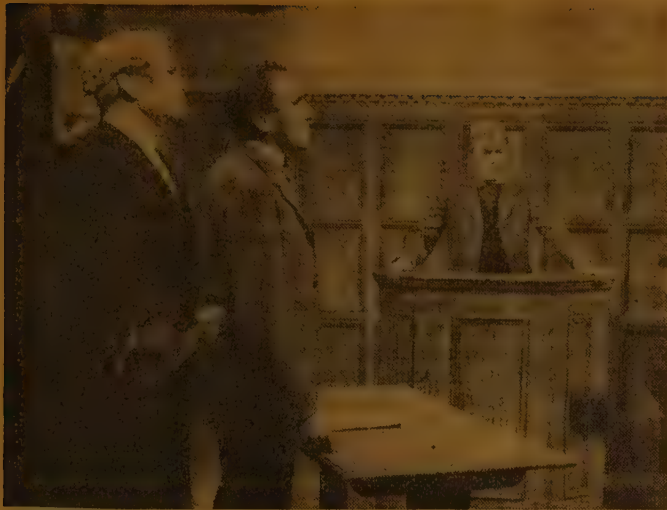


'This Is Your Royal Air Force', a programme in the 'Now' series, on May 15: left, an airman undergoing a test on the ground at high altitude; right, special suiting designed to keep a pilot cool in tropical temperatures



John Cura





'Jonathan North' on May 19, with (left to right) Bryan Coleman as Sir Edward Petty, Eric Porter in the title part, and Edward Chapman as Sir Christopher Grain

and connoisseur of brass. He is relentlessly thrustful; but he can thrust against the evil things. As he comes up and up, by way of sharp business deals, theatre ownership, newspaper ownership, and the best club, we know that the colliery magnate, who has been getting away with murder, will have a rough time: when Jonty buffets there is a weight of brass behind the blow.

On Sunday our eyes duly 'stood out like chapel hat-pegs' while Jonty conducted his own case in replying to the libel action brought against him by the brassy magnate, Eric Porter, who acted him in the television play *Michael Voysey* based on the foundation by Hodson (and J. R. Gregson), got the man across to us because we could observe him thinking and calculating. Some actors do not think or calculate. They make a big show of it; their eyes, too, stand out like hat-pegs, but there is nothing behind the gaze. It is easy to put on the armour of a tough fellow, a stick-at-nothing 'card'; but it takes an imaginative actor to fill it, to bring to his buffeting the true force.

When Jonathan North, fighting man, said on Sunday, 'Happen to be able to find all the money I want', we knew that it was no hollow boast; this was the voice of a man who had thought himself into the character. Most of the acting was solid, though I had little sense of the passing of the years. Some of the people looked younger in 1905 than they had done a decade before: it might have been a tribute, of course, to the exhilarating quality of the Saddlebridge air. It must be said for all concerned that the tale of making, breaking, and re-making rarely palled. Even if I did get a bit tired of the clangour midway, when the strong men met each other face to face, the final cross-examination scene gave genuine pleasure.

By then it was clear that the colliery magnate, far from being (if I can borrow from a novel of earlier date) 'a statue of yellow metal', was vulnerable at every point. I had hopes of a court presided over by so learned a figure as Mr. Justice Sequeira. Alas, evil triumphed. Never mind; Jonathan North was not a man to fling away ambition: no doubt there would be trouble for Sir Christopher when Jonty was in fighting form again. And if I could not believe in the ultimate domestic arrangement, I realised that they have their own method of ordering these matters in Saddlebridge.

The core of the piece appeared to be: 'It's not where you come from, it's where you finish up that matters'. Maybe various shrinking souls in the southern portion of these islands watched the last fade-out with a certain mild stir of gratitude that they had not 'finished up' in Saddlebridge during 1905.

Certainly I was glad not to be living in Decker City, Missouri, just after the American Civil War. 'The Survivors', by Peter Viertel and Irwin Shaw, did not call 'from a haunted ground armies of shadows, and the shadow-sound'. It merely tossed us into the middle of a local feud that ended with two bodies in a bar-room. Casper Wrede and Michael Elliott had lavished a most inventive and atmospheric production on dreary, muddled material. Even so, one fine performance

emerged: Wilfrid Lawson's as a kind of eternal Grandpa recalling his heated past in a voice that was like the crackling of dry brushwood. In one superb close-up his wry, seamed countenance could summon an entire period and an entire race. There is very little else to remember except the puzzled honesty of James Maxwell, an actor as relaxed as some of his colleagues were uncomfortably taut.

'The Winifred Atwell Show' had a pleasant moment in which we saw four pianos in echelon. (And only one of them Miss Atwell's.) Later Pierre Fournier, the 'cellist', ended magically a Sunday night that had begun, for me, with a long cannonade from the brass. (I notice that television now adopts the odd cinema-billing habit, in its printed programmes, of announcing X and Y 'in' such-and-such a play which 'introduces' Z. Eric Porter, who is among the best of our younger actors, was thus 'introduced' in the programme of 'Jonathan North'. The phrasing looked comic.)

J. C. TREWIN

#### Sound Broadcasting

#### DRAMA

#### TV or not TV?

REVIEWING VAL GIELGUD's new book, on another page, I have indicated that it might be a good thing to demand fewer productions from

the Drama Department and to give more rehearsal time to each, particularly to the greater plays, of course. No one who cares for drama would begin by whittling away some of the more substantial plays in the Third Programme and Home Service. Yet something of the sort seems likely to happen. 'The abolition of two hours' listening time every night', wrote *The Times* last month—actually the threatened cut in the Third next October is two hours and a half, to say nothing of the Sunday afternoons we have lost already—'will make it impossible to continue its work for the serious drama on anything like this scale'. The B.B.C. policy statement which evoked this elegy also said that in the Home Service 'there will be plays and feature productions as at present, including also some of those which now find a home in the Light Programme'. Since we were also then told that the Home and Light will merge at some hours each day, there is unlikely to be much more room for drama in the Home than there is at present. So the Light might drive out some of the standard drama, too. That is bad enough. But there is worse to follow.

If I understand Mr. Gielgud aright, there is also now beginning a change of emphasis in the selection of scripts, the effect of which will be to reduce progressively the number of broadcast plays of theatrical origin in favour of 'radio plays', the overwhelming majority of which will inevitably be adaptations from novels. Indeed, the process seems to be gathering momentum already. Last week's Monday night production in the Home Service was an adaptation from a novel: not, I am afraid, a very good adaptation, not good enough, anyway, for an actress of Celia Johnson's quality. There were adaptations from novels on the four preceding Mondays as well. In fact there has been one original play for radio, but none of theatrical origin, in the Home on Monday nights since the 'Against the Wind' series ended in March with Aeschylus. It seems imperative to spare comment on last week's actual productions, which would not respond very well to brief criticism anyway, to consider what Mr. Gielgud has to say about this trend.

He seems to believe that stage plays that have been done by the B.B.C. in his thirty years of distinguished service are pretty well done with. 'It has taken the Sound Services nearly thirty years before they have had to contemplate scraping the bottom of that particular barrel'. I am a little relieved to notice from this week's programme that the scrapings still include such things as Molière's 'Le Misanthrope', with some inconsiderable orts of Aristophanes' to follow in the Third next Sunday. But having, in his view, practically used up our entire theatrical heritage in one generation, Mr. Gielgud is the more willing to pass it over to television:

The stage play, originally conceived in terms of sight as well as of dialogue, proved in practice easier to transfer to the TV screen than to the microphone only. However admirably adapted it might be, the stage-play broadcast tended to remain a *pis-aller*—all very well for people who could never go to a theatre, but basically in its own right unsatisfactory. And for people who might not be able to go to a theatre, but could see a TV production, the version in sound could not ultimately hope to compete.

Mr. Gielgud is not merely saying that true radio plays are better radio than adapted stage plays. Such true radio plays of real artistic merit as 'Under Milk Wood' and 'All That Fall' must, unfortunately, always be few and far between. What then is sound broadcast drama in future mainly to consist of? Mr. Gielgud tells us. The greatest



Scene from 'The Survivors' on May 16, with (left to right) Anthony Jacobs as Finlay Decker, George A. Cooper as Roy Clemens, and James Maxwell as Steve Decker



significance of the 'Between Two Worlds' series late in 1955 (which included, incidentally, adapted stage plays by Shaw, Sartre, Betti, and Miller), 'was the fact that more than half of the pieces presented did not stem from the theatre at all. Aldous Huxley, Nigel Balchin, Edward Crankshaw, E. M. Forster were among the authors represented'. (That is, novels of theirs were competently rendered in dialogue by other writers of hardly comparable literary merit.) How did we take it?

During the first few weeks reception of the series, with its comparatively original implications, could only be described as mixed. The innate conservatism of the listening audience was not lightly to be challenged.

Mr. Gielgud cannot be suggesting that listeners were meeting the adapted novel on the air for the first or even the hundredth time. This has been going on, as he says elsewhere, since *Westward Ho!* was adapted for radio in 1925. I must let Mr. Gielgud finish:

But in the event the experiment was justified, and with it a considerable hope for the future of the medium. It may well be that radio drama, as it was known in its palmy days of audiences of millions with normal unadventurous taste for conventional theatre entertainment, is 'on its way out'. If it is so, it may not be altogether a bad thing. It had, after all, a pretty good run for the listeners' money. I believe it is giving place to something more exciting and worth while. In being compelled to fight for mere survival it has found the impulse for a re-birth. The next four or five years will show whether a Drama of the Air, more genuinely radio in conception and execution, can or cannot stand in line with the theatre, the films, and the television play. I hope and—for what my personal opinion may be worth—I believe that it will. It is certainly going to be fun to see.

That bombshell, apart from a brief 'Envoi', is the end of *British Radio Drama*. Mr. Gielgud's opinion is, of course, worth a very great deal, and is likely to determine what the Drama Department will in fact attempt. With regret and real respect I must record that my opinion, whose market value is not even quoted, is that the day on which the Drama Department ceases to regard theatrical drama as its permanent mainstay will mark the beginning of the end for broadcast drama. Why I think so I will take the first opportunity to say.

ROY WALKER

## THE SPOKEN WORD

### Artful Symposia

DURING THE COMPARATIVELY FEW years that sound broadcasting has been free from the manacles of scripted discussion we have become used to the idea of a symposium performed by a small group under a chairman. When the conditions are right it can produce programmes of enormously greater point and liveliness than those factitious discussions of the old days. At one time I imagine the more timid spirits in authority in the B.B.C. were scared that the speakers might dry up; give a puff to some trade product, or talk nonsense. Pre-recording and tape-recording have put these fears at rest, but in fact the best discussion programmes are probably those that go live and unscripted on to the air. The sense of occasion and the sense that, at that moment, a few million people are eavesdropping on his golden words gives a speaker an immense stimulation. His adrenalin flow is much less when he can think of those millions only in anticipation.

Mr. Colin MacInnes has been connected with many of these symposiums during the last few years, and his friendly, relaxed voice and no-nonsense manner are now familiar to most listeners. A few weeks ago he was chairman of a discussion on the problems of West Indian

immigrants, and he questioned the West Indian members of the panel without a trace of that paternal condescension that is liable to creep into the voice of even the best interviewers on such occasions. But he has a protean mind, and last week he presented a symposium on art-dealing which used the resources of pre-recording in a new way, and may perhaps create a new kind of discussion programme. He might have invited Mr. Colin Agnew, Mr. Oliver Brown, Mr. Fred Mayor, Mr. Charles and Mr. Peter Gimpel, and Mrs. Helen Lessore to discuss round the same table the fine art of dealing in art. But with just a touch of wickedness Mr. MacInnes preferred to interview each of them separately with a tape-recorder, ask each the same questions, and then compare the result to see how each assessed his trade and the many subtle problems of connoisseurship.

It was an excellent idea and, as was no doubt intended, one realised that the commercial world of art is made up of a number of individualists who read the taste of the time—and influence it—in their several ways. On only one thing did all absolutely agree: that they personally found it impossible to sell a painting they themselves did not admire, though they knew many dealers who could. Under these conditions one could imagine them gradually acquiring a really remarkable catholicity of taste and an admirably indulgent nature, but in fact a great dealer, like a great publisher, loses almost everything if he loses his individual taste.

I thought of this analogy with publishing as I listened to the programme, and went on to think about the difference between commercial relations in the visual arts and those in writing or music. The writer or composer depends on the reproduction of his work, whereas the painter or sculptor is selling the unique thing itself. Shakespeare and Beethoven come out of copyright, their works are free for reproduction throughout the world, and their work has an economic value only in a secondary sense. But a Michelangelo or a Goya continues to have a real economic value for all time. The visual arts, like no other arts, are always subject to economic conditions. Twenty years ago Mr. Mayor could not sell a Juan Gris for £50 which today he could sell immediately for £5,000. Now that the battle over modern art is virtually over, it is being exploited financially to an extraordinary degree. The great pioneers starved that Buffet could have his Rolls Royce. Most of the speakers in the symposium believed that the dealer only indirectly influences public taste, but I should have thought—particularly in the art of the past—that dealers, and the experts who advise them, do more than anybody to create the climate of taste, and that economic considerations are just as important as aesthetic ones. It is a horrifying thought that the present demand for the *seicentisti* which has followed years of absolute neglect can be seen, if only cynically, in terms of hard cash. Writers and composers are lucky that their work permits no similar exploitation.

To turn to something entirely different. With some curiosity I listened to Mr. E. F. Schumacher's talk on 'The Insufficiency of Liberalism' on the Third Programme. It was not an attack on the Liberal Party but on the liberal, rational humanism which has been under attack for so long in our time of furtive irrationalism. The liberal humanist can be complacent and muddled, but for sheer wooziness it would be difficult to better Mr. Schumacher's talk, in which he outlined a series of spiritual states which a man goes through before he reaches the 'second awakening' and the 'higher state'. I may be one of those who 'cannot see because they are unable to see', but Mr. Schumacher's utter lack of clarity did not make me wish to share his vision.

MICHAEL SWAN

## MUSIC

### Attack!

THERE ARE CONDUCTORS who are able to give on the very first beat of the music an impression of decisive command. Like good sprinters, they are quick off the mark. This ability is the product not only of training but, much more, of mental alertness and clear-cut decision based on an absolute conviction about the way the music should go. Toscanini had it, and last week Rudolf Kempe, who was in charge of the B.B.C. Orchestra, showed himself possessed of it. On the Tuesday evening, the first chord of Haydn's Symphony in B flat (No. 102) immediately gave one a feeling of confidence. One 'sat up' under its impact, saying, 'This is going to be all right.' And so it was—a beautiful performance, well phrased and with nicely judged tempi.

To such a conductor, who obviously knows exactly what he wants and has complete control over the players because, in the first place, he has control of himself, the orchestra responded with enthusiasm. The string-tone was rich—the result, I suspect, of unanimous bowing—and the wood-winds were on top of their form. Mahler's Fourth Symphony, too, was beautifully played. But here something was lacking, which I can only diagnose as a fundamental sympathy with Mahler's music, which in the hands of Bruno Walter, for instance, takes on a sense of poetry and a charm that make up for its sentimentalism and sophisticated naivety. Miss Joan Alexander, the soloist in the last movement, caught the right note of simplicity but did not seem altogether comfortable vocally.

Schubert's Symphony in C major in the Home Service Wednesday evening concert was, like Haydn's, given a wonderful start, so that one looked forward to a masterly performance. So it was in the first two movements. In the second Kempe underlined the *con moto* in the tempo-indication, and, perhaps in deference to the clock, made cuts. The speed was evidently not due to haste, for the Scherzo was taken a good deal slower than usual with the result that it dragged. I do not believe in the watch as the final court of appeal in these matters, but ten and a quarter minutes against Toscanini's eight and a quarter is a disproportionate difference. Nor did the music quite regain its impetus in the finale, and, withal, we were a minute or so late for the News! Perhaps this conductor is a sprinter who cannot stay the course in a three-mile symphony? But that is absurd, when one remembers his grand marathon effort in 'The Ring' at Covent Garden, which I beg the Third Programme (if it can bag the time from the new Network) to book in place of yet another cycle from Bayreuth.

Kempe also conducted Hindemith's 'Symphonia Serena'. This is in Hindemith's most attractive style. There is plenty of ingenuity, rhythmical and contrapuntal, in the score, of which a 'miniature' is published by Messrs. Schott. But the ingenuity does not obtrude on the musical thought, which is expressed with lucidity and charm. 'Serenity' does not mean that dramatic conflict, an essential ingredient of symphony, is absent, and indeed the work rather surprisingly lacks the quiet epilogue one might expect, ending *fortissimo* with jagged phrases. Like Vaughan Williams in his latest symphony, Hindemith scores his second movement for winds and his third for strings alone, the latter containing passages of dialogue between two solo violins and two violas, one on and one off the platform, an effect which was well managed in the broadcast.

On Friday in the Third Programme Trevor Harvey introduced us to a symphony by Elliott Carter, an American composer, whose music is, as *Grove's Dictionary* says euphemistically, 'remarkably free from mannerisms'. Though the



slow movement seemed to indicate sensibility, the rest was bright in a rather empty way and did not suggest any strong individuality behind the music.

The new work was preceded by an excellent performance of another of Haydn's London Symphonies, No. 99 in E flat, and Schumann's Introduction and Allegro Appassionato in which David Parkhouse joined the St. Cecilia Orchestra as pianist and showed this *Concertstück* to be one of Schumann's best concerted

works, and none the worse for not being on the large scale that so often defeated his powers of organisation, if not of invention.

At the end of the week the Third Programme began a course of Rossini's operas with his last, 'William Tell', which was sung in Italian about as well as one can hope to hear it in these days. Giuseppe Taddei sang with authority and dramatic force as Tell, and Mario Filippeschi proved a very good imitation of a heroic tenor with ringing high Cs, even if not quite the

real thing. Rosanna Carteri hardened her voice, which can sound better, for Mathilde's dramatic outburst and her ornaments were not always clear. Graziella Sciutti (Jemmy) and Miti Truccato Pace (Hedwig) both gave first-rate performances and Mario Rossi, the conductor, showed that firmness and decision from the first bar of the Overture (which was indeed beautifully played), that I have remarked in Rudolf Kempe.

DYNELEY HUSSEY

## Gerhard as Symphonist

By DAVID DREW

Roberto Gerhard's Symphony will be broadcast in the Third Programme at 7.10 p.m. on Friday, May 31, and 9.10 p.m. the following day

**H**E most honours my style who learns under it to find his own style'. This reversal of Whitman's words might well be taken as an epigraph on Schönberg's relation to his followers, and particularly to the two most talented of his younger pupils, Skalkottas and Gerhard. The position of these two highly distinguished yet neglected composers has certain points of similarity, though their music has little in common, and in any case Gerhard's career has been complicated by his voluntary exile from Spain. Leaving aside the somewhat Schönbergian Quintet which Gerhard composed after his five years' study with the Viennese master, we can see that the line of development from his Catalan Songs (1928) to the Piano Concerto (1949) extends the Spanish musical tradition from where Falla and Granados (Gerhard's first master) left it, to a point at which the reconciliation with Schönbergian method could be achieved without organic lesions. Gerhard was now more than capable of maintaining his own style *through* rather than *under* Schönberg's method.

The Symphony of 1952-53, which is unquestionably a culminating point and reveals the highest degree of stylistic and structural integration, is wholly consistent with the kind of chromaticised diatonicism which Gerhard has made his own since the late 'twenties. As in recent Stravinsky, the exploitation of the twelve-note field does not at all obscure the operation of tonal functions. Traditional tonal tensions and relationships play a vital, if transformed, role in the structure of the work. The way in which these are reconciled with the serial hierarchy deserves an article in itself, but here we need only note that the series has no thematic connotations. The consecutive order of pitches within convenient segments of the row is constantly changing, and only the integrity of the segments themselves is inviolable. It is a principle which has its origin in Schönberg's own practice in later years, and it is one that has attracted other composers besides Gerhard—notably Skalkottas and Seiber.

The Symphony is a kind of metaphysical 'Heldenleben', in so far as it is 'about' everything that has concerned the composer both as man and artist. One notes that the series is partly related to the one associated with the Knight in 'Don Quixote'. Serial and other affinities—for instance, the crucial role of chords of the thirteenth—are justified imaginatively, and one recognises that in the Symphony certain situations, or insistent intervals, have symbolic meaning. The work refers back not only to the Quixotic combination of illusion and self-knowledge, but also to the idea of power in a contemporary context, as allegorised in Gerhard's second major ballet, 'Pandora'. The Symphony makes a brief, translated, quotation from the score of both ballets. Another quotation (in the

first movement)—a rhythmic motive from Schönberg's menace-laden Op. 34—is not without significance.

It will be found that asymmetry is a ruling principle in the Symphony, from its largest unit (the relative proportion—2:2:3—of the movements) through the articulation of the main sections (governed by similar proportions) to the series, phrase, and rhythm-structure. In the rhythmic organisation one again becomes aware of the fruitful influence of Schönberg. Gerhard's debt to such things as 'The Dance Round the Golden Calf' is fully honoured. The form of the Symphony is determined in the first instance by what happens to the series. There is no 'theme', in the sense of 'subject', for the series is the only generator. In the course of its evolution, it defines certain regions, so that the idea of development and recapitulation resides solely in the exploration of, and renewed definition of, these regions. Change is a function of time, and the return to an established region will reveal that the landscape has altered. The sun has moved, the shadows have lengthened or shortened, and our vantage point is different.

Any attempt to listen to the work in terms of traditional thematicism is misguided, and one must resist the temptation to regard the contrapuntal texture, through force of habit, as divisible into foreground, middle-ground, and background. The abundant and expressive melodic figures are fully equated with their harmonic source, and their continuation may be expressed in purely vertical terms—as in the first lyrical section of the opening movement. The orchestral technique upon which this process relies is masterly in the extreme, though it may disappoint those who look for the 'ornamental' style of 'The Duenna' or the Violin Concerto.

The Symphony lasts just over thirty-five minutes. The division into three movements is deceptive, for the only real division occurs at the close of the slow movement, where it is confirmed by the unequivocal finality of the solo double-bass's tonal cadence. After the six-bar introduction to the work, stating the series (amongst other things), the opening movement concerns itself with the two regions which are defined in the first two minutes or so. The centre of the movement is a sequence of three scherzos, which subtly develop the second (lyrical) region, and interlock with extensions of the first region. The state of harmonic immobility which is reached at the close of the immense ostinato coda is translated into other terms in the introduction to the second movement—a subterranean scene in which the strings' impassive harmony is contrasted with the litanies of the wind instruments. Thus might Don Quixote have dangled at the end of his rope in the Cave of Montesinos. The momentum fans outwards through another mysterious region, culminates in a searing lament, and then returns to a most moving transfigura-

tion of the original scene. The Cave has become a great Gothic apse.

The finale is a journey across the regions that have already been opened up. But by now the relative tensions have altered. The Sanchoesque\* opening of the finale is indeed the Symphony's least troubled moment, but the re-entry of the lyrical region of the first movement introduces a feeling of profound disquiet. The disquiet develops into a huge struggle at every level, and culminates in the complete and appalling overthrow of all stability. (Compare the disintegration of the second movement of Britten's 'Sinfonia da Requiem' and of the fifth movement of Messiaen's 'Turangalila'). The recovery, through polyphony, is only relative, and the entire harmonic texture subsides in the shocked numbness of the piano's six-note ostinato. Truly this is what Camus means when he speaks of 'the Nada which could be born only in the presence of landscapes crushed by the sun'—the sun of Gerhard's native Catalonia, the blinding sun of Camus' *L'Etranger*, the man-made sun of Hiroshima. Camus comments: 'There is no love of living without despair of living'.

The crisis is followed by two stages of contemplation, which recollect from a great distance the litanies of the slow movement, and then, in utter tranquillity, the lament in the same movement. There is, to be sure, a return to light, but the whole tendency of the lengthy final section is that of a gradual ascension from the world of temporal things. After a final outburst of anguish, a cadence-feeling induced by the transcendent alleluias of the woodwind indicates that the existential drama is over. An immense chordal 'suction', compressing the entire harmonic substance of the Symphony, brings release but not finality. The impetus is immobilised by *ponticello* strings gradually rising through a region that is without real harmonic tensions (and is therefore devoid of time-sense). The cessation of all sound in the unison harmonics of violins and violas, lasting some twenty-five seconds and summarising in its varying density the proportions of the Symphony, is an equivocation. In the metaphysical sense, there is no end.

The sixty-third season of the Henry Wood Promenade Concerts will open at the Royal Albert Hall on July 20 and continue until September 14. Single tickets for the first and last nights are to be allocated by two ballots—No. 1 for the first concert and No. 2 for the last. Written application must be made separately for each ballot, accompanied by a stamped, addressed envelope, to the Royal Albert Hall, S.W.7, by June 1. Envelopes must be marked in the top left-hand corner with the number of the ballot, and remittances should not be enclosed. Opening booking dates for the remaining concerts will be announced later. The prospectus (price 6d.) will be available from the middle of June.

\* A Sancho that knows his 'Grosse Fuge', incidentally!



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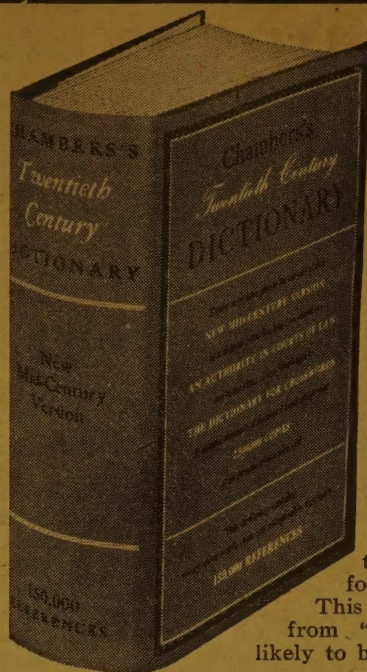
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For the Housewife

# Combating Insect Pests

By RUTH DREW

SEVERAL listeners have been asking what evasive action can be taken against ants, flies, and silver fish. To begin with ants: you must find the nest and destroy it. That means following the procession toiling home with food. There will be no mistaking the swarming nest when you reach it. Open it up with a trowel, and pour on a kettleful of really boiling water. Do this several times, at intervals, to catch all the residents. By the way of alternative, some people use paraffin to destroy ants' nests, or insecticide. You should ask for B.H.C. dust. If the nest is out of reach, you will need to lay a trap. This can be B.H.C. dust again, or the treacherous stuff that is sold for ringing fruit trees. Whatever you use, the plan is to make a ring right round the nest.

In combating flies, much the most important measure is prevention—seeing that no refuse is left lying about exposed, and that refuse for dustbins is closely wrapped up in newspaper. Dustbin lids should fit closely. Spraying round the house also helps to keep flies down. But you have to follow the manufacturer's directions carefully because some of these household sprays are inflammable and some must not come in contact with food. There are some special long-term sprays worth considering, and mid-May is the time to use them. These sprays leave a film that is poisonous to flies on wall

surfaces, and one thorough treatment lasts up to three months, unless the surface is very near a source of heat. Another point to check just now is screening. For example, cover larger windows with fine wire gauze.

Last, silver fish. They usually have a particular hiding-place: a favourite one is a dump of old newspapers, or a corner of linoleum in the kitchen, and they are attracted by moisture. You will see the insects scuttle homewards when you switch on the light. Your first move is to rout out this hiding-place, and have a good clean up. Next put down plenty of insect powder. (When you buy this powder, make sure it is a variety meant to tackle this particular insect.) Leave it down for about a week, then sweep it up and put down some more.

## Notes on Contributors

- ANDREW SHONEFIELD (page 811): formerly foreign editor of the *Financial Times*  
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NORMAN ST. JOHN-STEVAS (page 849): formerly Assistant Lecturer in Law, London University; author of *Obscenity and the Law*

## Crossword No. 1,408.

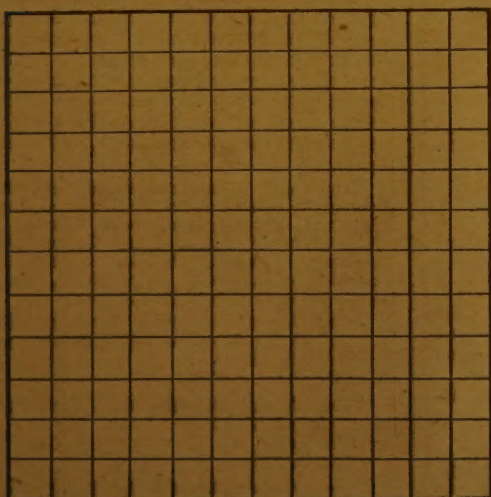
All Clear.

By Pipeg

Prizes (for the first three correct solutions opened): book tokens, value 30s., 21s., and 12s. 6d. respectively

Closing date: first post on Thursday, May 30. Entries should be on the printed diagram and envelopes containing them should be addressed to the Editor of THE LISTENER, Broadcasting House, London, W.1, marked 'Crossword' in the left-hand top corner. In all matters connected with the crosswords the Editor's decision is final

The diagram is symmetrical, with no blank squares, and the clues are in their proper order. The numbers, and the number of letters in the lights, are only given for six of the clues. In the blank diagram the numbers of the clues and the dividing bars between the lights are to be inserted.



## CLUES—ACROSS

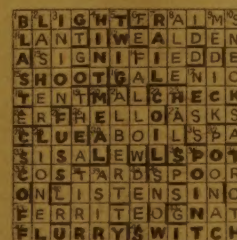
- The motor-horn keeps on making a clatter, we hear  
5. A County Councillor and a Socialist agree (6)  
Cockney calls for a Hawaiian dance in this hall  
Bone made plain by Paul Nash  
Sweet in an aloof languid fashion  
Fat-head isn't commonly wanting in strength  
Badly arranged tours for large parties  
Spoiling super ale—the worms!  
Strike the urchin in front of the old dean  
Take back the old hare to prepare the skin  
When the scamp gets through, he's a fine fellow  
These have supported kings and penitents  
27. Duck, with apple sauce, in Syria (6)  
An awkward Pole at a Spanish ball-game  
Taken along without a lead  
A lot of nonsense played on the violin  
Getting to know Heather round the old pine  
Scot's lament somehow gets the bird  
Wash the injured French canary  
This eagle is a vulture  
Scottish swell near Brighton  
Close to the left side  
To set a high value on Latin is an oddity of uncle  
43. Look at the hole that once held Gloucester's orb (6)

## DOWN

- Bantu tree under mythical mountain  
Trouble brewing for Mahomet's cousin  
3. Most of the tippie, an unknown quantity, fuddled the shrew (8)  
Omissions in setting type—nearly all 16  
Horrid cad Peter reprimanded

- Month in which you may be lulled to sleep  
Given a Burmese knife—thanks!  
Spenser comes after part of what the maiden sews  
Tyrant upset at scene of mutiny  
Black nigger's head with messy gore on it  
The wind-swept limes look pleasant  
Rounded up the swans for marking  
Write up, in French, 'The plant is here'  
The money belonging to me is a source of great profit  
Proverbially blamed by the bad workman  
Vary change later  
Heart-wood ridge extending lengthways  
27. State everything, showing nasty temper in the end (6)  
Refer to a short public notice  
If rising above the little company, this shows contempt  
Part of the legislator's defence  
Change the rate for this early award  
Colour of Old Man's Beard?  
38. Write up 'This is catmint' (3)

## Solution of No. 1,406



## NOTES

- Across: 11. Lant(skip); 16. gale-nic(e); 18. three mngs.; 21. (s)ert; 32. pas. anag.; 33. a-is-al; 41. s(print)-poor; 42. list+anag. of nines; 43. fer-rit-e; 44. rev. of tang.  
Down: 2. Three mngs.; 8. al(Q)-ee; 17. ne-Ss.; 21. al-(o)b-ert; 23. lash. anag.; 29. £1-one £; 32. rev. of can oop; 36. trot-h(arridan); 38. nirt(I vie); 40. rev. of seed.  
Prizewinners: 1st prize: C. L. Barham (Farnham); 2nd prize: Mrs. J. R. Nicol (London, S.W.1); 3rd prize: M. Cassel (London, W.C.1)

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